1999

Victims and criminals: Schutzmannschaft battalion 118 (Belarus, Ukraine)

Natalia Petrouchkevitch
Wilfrid Laurier University

INFORMATION TO USERS

This manuscript has been reproduced from the microfilm master. UMI films the text directly from the original or copy submitted. Thus, some thesis and dissertation copies are in typewriter face, while others may be from any type of computer printer.

The quality of this reproduction is dependent upon the quality of the copy submitted. Broken or indistinct print, colored or poor quality illustrations and photographs, print bleedthrough, substandard margins, and improper alignment can adversely affect reproduction.

In the unlikely event that the author did not send UMI a complete manuscript and there are missing pages, these will be noted. Also, if unauthorized copyright material had to be removed, a note will indicate the deletion.

Oversize materials (e.g., maps, drawings, charts) are reproduced by sectioning the original, beginning at the upper left-hand corner and continuing from left to right in equal sections with small overlaps.

Photographs included in the original manuscript have been reproduced xerographically in this copy. Higher quality 6" x 9" black and white photographic prints are available for any photographs or illustrations appearing in this copy for an additional charge. Contact UMI directly to order.

Bell & Howell Information and Learning
300 North Zeeb Road, Ann Arbor, MI 48106-1346 USA

UMI®
800-521-0600

VICTIMS AND CRIMINALS:
SCHUTZMANNSCHAFT BATTALION 118.

By

Natalia Petrouchkevitch

Honours Bachelor of Arts, History, the University of Western Ontario, 1998

THESIS

Submitted to the Department of History

In partial fulfilment of the requirements for

Master of Arts Degree

Wilfrid Laurier University

1999

TABLE OF CONTENTS

FOREWORD

This thesis deals with two geopolitical areas – Ukraine and Belarus. Though they are now two independent countries, prior to and during the Second World War they were both parts of the Russian Empire. After the revolution of 1917 they became incorporated into the Soviet Union and were officially known as the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic and the Belarussian Soviet Socialist Republic. The terms "Ukraine" and "Belarus" in this work, therefore, have to be understood as references mainly to geographical areas, not political entities.

The population of the two republics was largely homogeneous, but on both territories there also lived ethnic Russians. Poles, Jews, and Turks. When reference is made to "Ukrainians" it means "ethnic Ukrainians". When the work deals with any other groups, the specific reference will be made. For example, Jews are referred to as "Ukrainian Jewish population" and so forth. A Similar rule applies to Belarus. "Belarussians" means ethnic Belarussians. All of the other groups will be specifically defined. The word "Germans" in this work does not refer to all the German people, but to the occupying army and its command.

Since many of the sources for this work are in Russian, Belarussian, Ukrainian and German languages, something needs to be said about the names and geographical places that are mentioned. All German names are kept in original Latin spelling. Since all the other languages use Cyrillic alphabet, the Russian, Belarussian and Ukrainian names are transliterated according

to the Library of Congress Transliteration System. In many German documents, the transliterations were already made into the German language, however, in this work those places are transliterated from the original language.

PREFACE

The issues of the Second World War have always been an important motive in state propaganda in the former USSR. Growing up in the Soviet Union I learned to associate my patriotic feelings with heroism and sacrifice of Soviet people during the Great Patriotic War 1941-1945. Moreover, personal accounts of the war and occupation that I heard from the members of my family almost completely agreed with the official version of the wartime history of the USSR. The Soviet accounts stressed that the struggle against the invaders was almost unanimous, and many cases of passive responses to the war or collaboration were mentioned only briefly.

During my university studies in Canada I discovered a number of studies by western historians dealing with collaboration in the USSR during the war. I became interested in this subject and decided to study it in more depth. From one of the collegues who also studied the German occupation of the USSR I learned that the village of Khatyn, which was made a symbol of all the burnt villages in Belrussian SSR by the Soviet propaganda, was in fact destroyed not by the Germans, but by ethnic Ukrainians. This intrigued me, and I decided to investigate this case further. Most of the primary materials on the subject came from the United States Memorial Holocaust Museum Archive, which contained records from the October Revolution State Archive in Minsk conserning Khatyn. The battalion that was involved in burning of the village was *Schutzmannschaft* 118, or *Ukrainian Schuma*. The collection contained records of other activities of the battalion during the war. After reading these records I decided to look at wartime collaboration and issues associated with it through a case study of this unit.

This investigation did not provide me with definite answers as to why and how people become collaborators. Through my study I have discovered that this issue involves a number of different motives, reasons, and circumstances that determine people's choices in conditions of the war. The most important thing I learned was that generalizations about collaboration or other social phenomena limit our understanding of complexity of peoples' responses in any given circumstances. Without taking into account such motives as nationalistic or anti-Soviet sentiments, pursuit of personal gain, or satisfaction of survival needs it is impossible to fully understand the issue of wartime collaboration. Study of those factors, in turn, would lead to re-evaluation of other related issues, for example, our understanding of war crimes, and help us reconstruct a fuller picture of the events of World War II.

INTRODUCTION

The German army invaded the USSR on June 22, 1941. Within a month it was able to occupy large segments of Soviet territory. The invasion aimed at bringing to life the long held German ambition to colonize the East, *Drang nach Osten.* These ideas had previously played an important role in German foreign policy and prior to the Second World War Hitler incorporated them in his *Mein Kampf.* The move East was considered a *manifest destiny* for the Germans. It would allow them to acquire living space for their settlers. The conquered USSR would be no more than a colony, and the local population, which was considered inferior to the German race, would be turned into "white slaves". The conquest was considered essential to assure the material well-being of the German people.[1] The military measures that would be necessary to conquer the USSR were thoroughly outlined by the Germans. They also prepared detailed plans to employ the economic resources of the occupied territories to their advantage. However, their political planning for this area was given very little attention, and the German invaders failed to make use of "political warfare". It involved playing on political ambitions of various nationalistic and other interest groups in the occupied countries and extensive use of propaganda.[2]

Even the most detailed plans needed to be adjusted as the events of the war on Soviet territory developed. In the first days of the invasion the Germans captured several million Red

---

[1] Dallin, Alexander, German Rule in Russia 1941-1945: A Study of Occupation Policies, (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1957), p. 7.

[2] Ibid., p. 18.

Army soldiers. During the first months of the war the Germans also suffered 25 percent causalities. The fierce resistance of the retreating Red Army forced some changes in German military plans, who had to face unexpectedly difficult economic conditions as a result of Stalin's *scorched earth* policy. Industrial and agricultural machinery and livestock were moved away or destroyed, leaving the local inhabitants without any means of subsistence. The social order was also weakened since the Soviet government was crippled by the German attack, and left the population in the German-occupied zone largely to their own devices.[3] In that situation the people were faced with a choice: "accepting foreign invasion and adapting to sharply changed living conditions or actively fighting against the invaders."[4] People could also chose to remain uninvolved during the occupation by foreign invaders.

The German racial dogmas added to the brutality with which the population of the occupied areas was treated. On the other hand, put in such circumstances many of the Soviet people reacted with stubborn resistance and organized one of the strongest partisan movements in history. This active resistance increased tremendously already in 1942, and grew stronger towards the war's end. It became one of the main leitmotifs of the Soviet and some Western historical works in the first two decades after the war. However, the scale of this resistance has often been overestimated in historical literature. One recent source estimated in 1998 that only about five percent of the population of the Belorussian Soviet Socialist Republic was involved in active armed struggle against the Germans. The majority responded to the invasion passively.

---

[3] Vakar, N. P., Belorussia: The Making Of a Nation, (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1956), pp. 170-171.

[4] Kuzmenko, Vladimir I., "Belarus' During World War II: Some aspects of the Modern View of the Problem", The Journal of Slavic Military Studies, vol. 11, No.2 (June 1998), p. 101.

The people were inclined to "sit out the war", since they supported neither the Soviet nor the German side. At the other extreme there were those who had previously suffered from all types of repression by the Soviet authorities. They felt no loyalty towards the USSR, and were even ready to co-operate with the occupiers. Collaboration, therefore, was another type of response to the invasion.[5]

During the war years a considerable volume of records was produced by both the occupiers and the occupied. Germans kept meticulous police and economic records. They even recorded the executions of the Jewish and Slavic population of the region. The Soviet collection of documents included the directives of the higher command to the guerillas and the underground fighters, and records kept in the partisan units. Data was also gathered on the damage inflicted on the enemy, as well as partisan losses. Those documents became the basis for several historical studies that were undertaken in the post-war years by both Soviet and Western scholars. Those documents, however, need to be approached critically, since "overstatement of one's own successes by those who are accountable to the higher leadership and receive from them approval, awards, etc., is a characteristic of any war."[6] Many Western historians questioned the validity of the materials available to them, and carefully examined their data. This did not always happen in the Soviet historiography. There are known instances of Soviet documents being inaccurate. For example, Belarussian historian Kuzmenko in his recent article notes that some researchers believe that the information received at Belorussian Partisan Headquarters was

---

[5] Ibid., p. 102.

[6] Ibid., pp. 107-108.

based on on-the-spot reports and thus was significantly inflated.[7] Similar shortcomings were noted in German military reports.[8] Not all the Soviet works took this into account. Moreover, in some instances the Soviet historians misused the data to serve propaganda purposes.

However, the issue of the occupation received much attention and within a decade historians produced a wealth of literature on this topic. The interest in this subject can be attributed to the fact that during the period from 1941 to 1944 the occupation affected the lives of millions of people. Moreover, histories of the Second World War in many ways became propaganda tools during the Cold War. Therefore, in their early studies historians were often affected by their ideological and political beliefs. Towards the end of the Cold War, however, those established formulas and motivations no longer seemed relevant and new approaches to the issues of the occupation were brought in.

Studies of the German occupation of the USSR started almost as soon as the war ended, and were largely based on German documents captured by the Allied armies and interrogations of survivors. A survey of the most important works about the war on the Eastern Front, including the German occupation of Soviet territory was completed by Rolf-Dieter Muller and Gerd R. Ueberschar in 1997. Their work Hitler's War in the East, 1941-1945: A Critical Assessment, is an indispensable guide to the relevant secondary sources and published documents. The book looks at the studies conducted in German, Russian and English languages. This work is divided into sections, each of them dedicated to various issues concerning the war in the East In this way, the most important historical debates are summarized and the most significant works are

---

[7] Ibid., p. 107.

[8] Dallin, p.88.

identified on every topic. In the section on German occupation policies, the authors present an overview of military and political aims of the invasion, German administrative policies, the partisan war, recruitment of the Soviet citizens into police forces and German military, and economic exploitation.[9] The book provides a useful entry point for those studying the outlined topics in more detail.

Soviet historians produced several multi-volume works on the history of the Second World War, devoting significant attention to the study of the German occupation. One of the best known collections is the twelve volume The History of the Second World War, 1939-1945, produced by the Ministry of Defence in cooperation with the Academy of Sciences in 1982. This work was based on numerous secondary sources written during the Stalinist era as well as Soviet archival documents, which the authors use to highlight German political aims in the 1941 invasion and the brutal crimes Nazis committed against Soviet citizens. They also stress the role of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union,[10] which, they maintain, was the leading force in organizing the anti-Nazi movement, and defeating the enemy both at the front and in the rear.[11]

Modelled on that work were other case studies undertaken on the occupation of he various Soviet republics. Using many of the primary and secondary materials identified in The History of the Second World War, these works addressed issues posed by the occupation at the local levels which allows for a more detailed explanations of such themes as anti-German as well

---

[9] Muller, Role-Dieter, and Geld, R. Ueberschar, Hilers's War in the East 1941-1945: A Critical Assessment, (Oxford: Berghahn Books, 1997), pp. 315-344.

[10] Гречко, А. А., История Второй Мировой войны, (Москва: Ордена Трудового Красного Знамени военное издательство Министерства Обороны СССР, 1973), v. 4, pp. 344-345, and v. 7, p. 352.

[11] Ibid., v. 8, p. 330.

as anti-partisan propaganda, actions of particular partisan units, the role of communication networks and the struggle over their control. They use more primary documents and memoirs of the participants of the events. Examples of these works include The All-People Struggle in Belorussia against the German-Fascist Occupiers prepared by the Academy of Sciences of the Belorussian SSR, and Undefeated Belorussia by P. Lipilo. These thorough studies outlined most important aspects of the events that had taken place in the republic and help better understanding of the local issues.

A number of general histories of the Soviet republics also contain important descriptions of local conditions during the German occupation. Those studies utilize both Soviet and German documents that are available in the archives of those republics, and are similar to the previous group in that they concentrate on the roles of the Communist Party organizations in those republics during the Great Patriotic war.[12] For that reason these works contain some serious omissions. For example, they almost completely avoid such issues as the nationality question in the Soviet Union, and its connection to the possible collaboration of Soviet citizen with the invaders.

Most of the earliest Soviet studies are characterized by a self-congratulatory and heroic tone. Even the works pertaining to individual Soviet republics deal mainly with general trends, and rarely present the stories of particular groups or individuals. They also deliberately ignore such issues as popular dissatisfaction with the Soviet regime, and examples of collaboration of

---

[12] For example,Абцедарский, Л. С., История Белорусской ССР, (Минск: ИздательствоАкадемии Наук Белорусской ССР, 1961); Дубина, К. К., История Украинской ССР, (Киев: «Наукова думка», 1966); Страдзиня, К. Я., История Латвийской ССР, (Рига: Издательство Академии Наук Латвийской ССР, 1958); and Таутавичюс, А., История Литовской ССР, (Вильнюс: Москлас, 1978).

the local population with the Germans during the occupation. In order to avoid internal censorship and criticism by the authorities, Soviet historians viewed the war as an ideological struggle between fascism and Communism, and avoided talking about nationality issues, as well as any failures of the Soviet army or partisan movement. Therefore, although these studies do contain some valuable information, they need to be approached with an understanding of the ideological constraints faced by their authors.

Another noticeable shortcoming in the Soviet histories of the German occupation is their uncritical approach to both the Soviet and German records and other documents. The note on materials used in preparing the study "The History of the World War II, 1939-1945", for example, was limited to general statements that claim that Soviet historians use the guidelines of the Marxist-Leninist methodology in their work and therefore were correct:

> The Soviet historians showed convincingly the indestructible power and might of the socialist state system; the leading and directing role of the Communist party, its great authority among the masses, its strength, and military courage; and the great energy that our people demonstrated at war and at work.[13]

Predominantly concentrating on those questions, most Soviet historians failed to describe the whole complexity of the occupation.

The research materials used in Soviet works are also identified only as document groups from several archives. This style of footnoting does not provide the reader with the necessary information about the types of materials used in those works and makes it difficult to evaluate their validity or to check their accuracy. The documents used in those works come from the Central Party Archive of the Institute of Marxism-Leninism, the Central State Archive of the

---

[13] Гречко, А. А., v. 1, p. vi.

October Revolution, the Central Archive of the Red Army, the Archives of the Soviet Navy, and several Soviet diplomatic archives. Even when the authors mention that some of the sources came from Hungarian, British, West German, Italian, French and other foreign archives, they do not tell the reader what kinds of documents were actually utilized.

A similar system of footnoting is present in local histories. For example in the History of the BSSR footnotes were entirely absent. At the end of the book, the authors only provide the reader with information on the names of the archives whose materials were used in their book: the State Archive of the BSSR, Vitebsk District State Archive, City of Pinsk State Archive, Belarussian State Museum of History of the Great Patriotic War, Hrodno District State Archive and many others.[14]

Other historical works produced in the Soviet Union went beyond traditional ideological views while discussing the German occupation. Within a frame of strict censorship, some Soviet historians succeeded in addressing many issues that traditional histories ignore. They describe the day to day life of the civilians under occupation, and stress the tragedy which many of the inhabitants of the occupied USSR survived. Examples include a collection of primary documents on the German occupation of the Belarussian SSR by P. Lipilo and V. Romanovsky, entitled The Crimes of the German-Fascist Occupiers in Belorussia, published in 1965, and a compilation of the interviews with wartime residents compiled by Ales Adamovich, Yanka Bryl and Vladimir Kolesnik (Out of the Fire), in 1980, and Anatoli Kuznetsov's (documental novel Babi Yar) printed in 1979. They focused on personal accounts and published relevant

---

[14] Абцедарский, Л. С. История Белорусской ССР, (Минск: Издательство Академии Наук Белорусской ССР, 1961), p. 702.

documents, and thus avoided conclusions about the Marxist-Leninist tradition. Their real aim was to demonstrate that, "A decisive part in this nationwide struggle was played by the devotion to their country and human courage of the partisans and underground fighters, of all those Soviet people whom the Nazis could only kill but were unable to turn into slaves."[15]

An equally vast literature on the German occupation was produced in the West. During the early 1950s, historians working for the U.S. military had access to the captured German documents of the Wermacht and the Ministry for the Occupied Eastern Territories, and these materials in turn became the basis of several serious studies.[16] German Rule in Russia 1941-1945: A Study of Occupation Policies by Alexander Dallin published in 1957 remains one of the most detailed and impressive studies of the occupation. Dallin first examines the goals of the German invaders and concludes that they lacked political planning beyond the vague notion that Soviet people would be denied any sort of self-government and political organization. The Germans thus missed an incredible opportunity to win the population to their side, which itself might have been decisive in turning the tide of battle in their favour.[17] Instead, their brutal treatment of Soviet prisoners of war and the civilian population, turned many Soviet citizens against the Germans, and stimulated the growth of the partisan movement in various areas.[18] The administrative system that was consequently established by the Nazis in the occupied USSR was

---

[15] Adamovich, Ales, Bryl, Yanka, and Kolesnik, Vladimir, Out of the Fire, (Moscow: Progress Publishers,1980), p. 6.

[16] Müller, and Ueberschär, pp. 286-287.

[17] Dallin, pp. 19, 65.

[18] Ibid., pp. 44, 209.

defined by Dallin as "authoritarian anarchy" since the agencies of civilian and military administration were in constant conflict with one another.[19]

In his book Dallin devotes a great deal of attention to the nationalities' question. German theoretical concepts about the future ethnic hierarchy in the East resulted in a division by which the German race would be on top, followed by *Volksdeutsche*, then non-Slavs, non-Russians, and Russians, with so-called "Undesirables" at the bottom. At the same time, Nazis attempted to cooperate with emigres in stimulating national feeling in various non-Russian populations. Because of the differences between their doctrine and policy, the Germans failed to satisfy the nationalists, and in most cases antagonized rather than won them over to the German cause.[20]

Dallin maintained that German economic policy in the USSR was difficult to implement since the invaders had to work in an abnormal situation created by the Soviet evacuation and scorched earth policy. Moreover, the time period of the occupation was not long enough to allow the Nazis to accomplish their economic goals.[21] Even, the program of forcibly recruiting slave labourers for work in Germany known as the *Ostarbeiters*, may have been successful in terms of the work performed, but contributed to the spread of anti-German sentiment.[22]

Dallin's book also examines German attempts to pacify the Eastern civilian population through propaganda, and the church. He also provides an extensive analysis of the Vlasov programme, which proposed the creation of Russian and other national anti-Bolshevik self-

---

[19] Ibid., p. 98-99.

[20] Ibid., p. 225.

[21] Ibid., p. 406.

[22] Ibid., pp. 450, 430.

governments that would operate under German military guidance. The Germans eventually abandoned their political dogmas and employed armed Soviet collaborators in order to help their war effort. By the end of the war nearly one million were serving in German uniform.[23]

Still, Dallin concluded that the German occupation was a failure militarily, administratively and politically. Having witnessed the actions of the Germans during the opening months of the war, many Soviet citizens came to prefer their "familiar, even though unhappy, native rule to that of the oppressive stranger."[24] In his opinion, the Nazis lost because of their cruelty. He, however, failed to avoid the Cold War bias in his work. Dallin underestimated and nearly completely ignored the popular support that the Soviet government enjoyed among its people despite the repressions and difficult living conditions in the country. One reason for this could be that Dallin used mainly German records in his study. He also relied on the reports compiled by former Soviet citizens who collaborated with the Germans during the war, and were living in the United States when Dallin conducted his studies.

A similar analysis of the occupation was undertaken by Gerald Reitlinger in The House Built on Sand: The Conflicts of German Policy in Russia 1939-1945, published in 1960, shortly after Dallin. In his critically acclaimed work he analysed *Ostpolitik*, its origins, the direction it took, and its end. Though it is quite similar to Dallin's book, it focuses more on the policy making in the German command. Reitlinger demonstrated that despite the planning undertaken before the war, the German leaders went through many unresolved issues and confusions, while adjusting the originally intended policy to the changing conditions of the war.

---

[23] Ibid., pp.482-485, 555-584, 607-611.

[24] Ibid., p. 678.

Another important study was undertaken by John Armstrong in his book Soviet Partisans in World War II. The majority of the studies included in his book were originally written as part of the War Documentation Project. One of the most useful aspects of this book is that it contains an appendix including several primary Soviet documents, such as orders issued by the Soviet command and propaganda materials, and examines the general characteristics of the Soviet partisan movement. According to Armstrong, there were many experiences of partisan fighting in Russian history prior to World War II. However, the Soviet government made practically no plans for partisan warfare before the German invasion in 1941.[25] However, throughout the war the partisan movement went through a major transformation from the small dispersed units to a highly structured and organized operation.[26] In a very short period of time the partisans began employing sophisticated methods of fighting. These included developing large scale psychological warfare and assisting the Soviet Army by carrying out various intelligence assignments.[27] Analysing the methods of anti-guerilla fighting utilized by the Germans, Armstrong concludes that the brutal actions of the Nazis, such as the burning of entire villages and the mass extermination of those suspected of cooperation with the partisans, turned public opinion against the invaders.[28]

All three of these major studies, as well as others written during the Cold War period, were characterized by an assumption that the Germans could have won the war in the East, and

---

[25] Armstrong, John A., Soviet Partisans in World War II, (Madison: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1964), pp. 11-13.

[26] Ibid., pp. 73-86.

[27] Ibid., pp. 225, 344-347.

[28] Ibid., pp. 336, 433.

that they failed because they committed certain fatal mistakes. The studies aimed at drawing conclusions from the German defeat, as a "lesson for the West".[29] The study that was most intended to provide a blueprint for Western military forces was Communist Guerilla Warfare by C. Aubrey Dixon and Otto Heilbrunn. This work was based on the German records on the occupation of the USSR and gave detailed analysis of the structure and organization of Soviet partisan forces during World War II, and then looks at the German response. The authors attribute most German mistakes to their supreme political and military leaders and give almost no credit to the Soviet state. Dixon and Heilbrunn assumed that if the Germans were less brutal in their behaviour in the occupied USSR, the Soviet government would not have enjoyed any popular support.[30] They conclude that:

> The Germans in their failure are responsible for placing in the hands of the Soviets the very weapon which they are now wielding with success in other parts of the world. If we are to defeat this menace ourselves, we must first learn from the experience of others, and then act with the utmost vigour and determination.[31]

This work provides a detailed study of both guerilla and anti-guerilla strategy and tactics, as well as the theoretical background behind them. It is also valuable in that it demonstrates how the political situation of the period in which the history is written affects the views and approaches that historians take in their studies.

In the late 1980s the historians on both sides began to question the assumptions that had

---

[29] Mulligan, Timothy Patrick, The Politics of Illusion and Empire: German Occupation Policy in the Soviet Union, 1942-1943, (New York: Praeger Publishers, 1988), pp. 1-2.

[30] Dixon, C. Aubrey, and Heilbrunn, Otto, Communist Guerilla Warfare, (New York: Frederick A. Praeger, 1955) p. 175.

[31] Ibid., p. 126.

been held during the earlier period. In The Politics of Illusion and Empire: German Occupation Policy in the Soviet Union, 1942-1943, Timothy Mulligan claimed that the idea of a missed German opportunity led historians to overlook certain issues. He points out that the treatment of Soviet political disaffection under German occupation was based on flawed ideological assumptions. Soviet historians denied their political system's susceptibility to German propaganda, while their Western colleagues studied the topic for possible use against the Soviet Union in a future conflict.[32] Mulligan, meanwhile, focused on the study of the German occupation policy and its reform. Rather than talking about German mistakes, he concentrated on the underlying assumptions and illusions held by German policy-makers.[33]

One of the most important theoretical concepts behind the German doctrine was the quest for *Lebensraum* in the East. However, German leaders disagreed on how to apply it. Mulligan argues that this conflict was rarely fought in the open. It took different forms, such as personal feuds, jurisdictional disputes and jumbled responsibilities. This approach to Eastern policy created a state of chaos where everyone realized that some reform was necessary, but nobody had a clear concept of what needed to be done.[34]

Mulligan also studies and analyses attempts to reform the German command system during the early stage of the war. He describes various views on the reform in German military leadership, the way it was implemented in different occupied regions, agrarian, political, and economic policies. He also addresses such issues as collaboration among the local population,

---

[32] Mulligan, pp. 1-2.

[33] Ibid., p. 2.

[34] Ibid., pp. 15, 31.

anti-partisan warfare, and Vlasov's movement. He concludes that even though the Germans alienated many people, they still acquired considerable gains by recruiting collaborators and exploiting the local economy. The movement for reform from within the German administration helped adjust some German doctrines, but Hitler determined the actual policy and blocked many initiatives. He ignored his generals' advice to take a defensive policy, and even those who proposed the reforms themselves did not realize that there was no basis for lasting cooperation between Germans and the Soviet peoples. Those misconceptions, according to Mulligan, might have contributed to the defeat of Germany more than the various mistakes and missed opportunities.[35]

Often studies deal with the occupation of specific regions of the USSR. N. Vakar, in his Belorussia: The Making Of a Nation, described the occupation policies that the German practised in the republic and devoted a great deal of attention on the German exploitation of the nationalistic issues. Similar developments in Ukraine are addressed in the book by Yury Boshyk, Ukraine During World War II: History and Its Aftermath. He attempted to understand and explain the reaction of the Ukrainian population to the German policies, because they were caught between the Communist oppression on one side and German oppression on the other.[36] Another study based on documents collected by the American Office of Special Investigation (John Loftus The Belarus Secret) deals with issues of Belarusian nationalism, collaboration, and war crimes committed by both the Germans and local collaborators on occupied Belarusian soil.

The issue of Soviet citizens serving in the German armies is explored in more detail by

---

[35] Ibid., pp. 183-187.

[36] Boshyk, Yury, Ukraine During World War II: History and Its Aftermath, (Edmonton:

Jurgen Thorwald in The Illusion: Soviet Soldiers in Hitler's Armies. Based on primary documents as well as on the memoirs of participants, this book provides a great deal of insight into the motives behind collaboration. David Littlejohn's The Patriotic Traitors also gives an overview of the various units of Soviet collaborators organized by the Nazis, as well as their motivation, organization and structure.

In addition to Armstrong's study on the partisan movement Matthew Cooper's book The Nazi War Against Soviet Partisans 1941-1944 deals with the struggle between the occupiers and the partisans. Cooper concludes that though the guerilla movement influenced the course of events during World War II, its actions did not greatly affect the military apparatus in the Soviet Union.[37]

Western historians include information about their sources, and inform readers of how to access the cited documents.[38] Their studies use materials collected as evidence for the war crimes trials in Nuremberg. They also use sources gathered by the various military sponsored research projects. One such study, *Alexander*, was undertaken by the War Documentation Project under contract with the United States Air Force. The research collected a significant amount of material including records of armies corps, divisions, and regiments, contemporary newspapers and leaflets, records of interrogations of those involved, as well as statements, interviews, diaries, manuscripts and memoirs.[39] Western historians also provide information on

---

Canadian Institute of Ukrainian Studies, 1986), pp. 90-91.

[37] Cooper Matthew, The Nazi War Against Soviet Partisans 1941-1944, (New York: Stein and Day, 1979), p. 162.

[38] For example, Armstrong, p. 771, and Dallin, p. xvii.

[39] Armstrong, p. vii.

the methodology they used during Project *Alexander*. More recent studies employ a wider range of materials. They, for example, use several German diplomatic records, which are part of the National Archives Collection of Seized Enemy Records. Several Jewish research institutions also made their records available to historians.[40]

The materials employed in the West in the study of the German occupation of the Soviet Union also require a critical approach. There might be exaggerations and inflation of facts in the military records. Interrogations, interviews and memoirs can be affected by personal biases. The Western authors, however, were well aware of the shortcomings that might come with certain types of documents. They often include a note on reliability of certain documents in question.[41]

The majority of research done on the subject of German occupation of the Soviet territory is based on German primary documents. Soviet military records of this period appears in those studies in much smaller numbers due to the restrictions set by the Soviet authorities. During the 50s, 60s and 70s several general works were written that established a framework for further research. Those works mainly dealt with the larger issues, such as occupation policies or the partisan movement at large. This can partly be attributed to the lack of necessary materials to conduct studies on specific topics. However, it was largely the Cold War bias in works of both Western and Soviet historians that lead them to generalize, make sweeping statements and conclusions, and thus simplify many issues of the Second World War. These works however prepared a strong basis for the future studies.

The end of the Cold War and *Perestroika* era in the USSR became important factors in

---

[40] Mulligan, pp. 189 - 190.

[41] For example, Armstrong, pp. 34, 145, and Dallin, p. 88.

determining the direction in which the historiography of German occupation of the Soviet Union was developing in the late 80s and in the 90s. One of the most important aspects in it was that many Soviet archives became opened to the Western historians. Therefore, many new materials, such as military records, reports and propaganda materials, were made available that stimulated future studies. Also, when the USSR was no longer considered the enemy, the Western people began to realize that the Soviet Union is not a monolitic society. It consists of various ethnic groups, and interactions between these groups are extremely complex. Within the ethnic groups Western historians discovered various regional identities. This lead to interest in more specific studies of the Soviet Union, and of the German occupation in particular.

The examples of such studies are Hitler's Willing Executioners: Ordinary Germans and the Holocaust by Daniel Goldhagen, and The Eastern Front, 1941-1945: German troops and the Barbarization of War by Omar Bartov. In these works, the authors challenge the Cold War era approach to the Second World War. They introduce such important issues as ideological beliefs that existed in various countries prior to the war, and the effects they had on the actions of the individuals in the war circumstances. They also stress that the responces to the war differ among various groups in the population, and even among the individuals within these groups. These studies introduced many important issues that were previously ommitted in the works of historians.

Though there are many studies dealing with general aspects of the German occupation of the western USSR, little work done on particular units, battalions or individuals. This work will examine the issue of collaboration during the German occupation, and in particular will concentrate on the Schutzmannschaft Battalions, the auxiliary forces formed of the local

population that aided the invaders. The Case of the Schutzmannshaft Battalion 118 will help demonstrate the multitude of motives behind the German decision to employ the indigenous forces during the occupation, as well as provide an insight into the multifaceted motivations behind the local people's responses to the extreme conditions created by the foreign invasion and occupation. Such case studies of group and individual responses to the German invasion and occupation of the western regions of the Soviet Union can help historians understand the whole complexity of the occupation experience.

An examination of the pressing issues that existed in the area under study prior to the war will establish a basis for an understanding of the events that took place in Ukraine and Belarus after the German invasion.

II. POPULAR RESPONSES TO THE GERMAN INVASION

On the eve of the Second World War, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, as a multinational state, represented a complicated case in ethnic relations. Though it proclaimed itself to be a voluntary union representing the popular will of the various republics, not everyone was enthusiastic about living in the united state with Russia. The history of those relations is long and complicated. However, a clear understanding of the nationalist sentiments in the Ukraine and Belarus is necessary in order to explain the complex responses provoked by the German invasion of those regions during World War II.

Both Belarus and Ukraine were part of the Russian Empire, which was destroyed by the revolution of 1917. Various political parties immediately in 1917 began their struggle for the independence of their lands. They were able to consolidate into political blocks, and for short period of time entertained the idea of forming new political entity populated by Belarussian and Ukrainian ethnic groups. The Ukraine declared its independence on November 20, 1917,[42] and Belarus - on March 25 1918.[43] However, despite the determined efforts by the nationalistic and patriotic elements in those newly formed republics to preserve their sovereignty, Russian power and influence proved irresistible.

Ukrainian independence suffered from the complex diplomatic relations existing during and after the World War I. The Ukrainian Central government (*Rada*) was democratic and socialist in its ideology. For that reason it did not show enough loyalty towards the Germans,

---

[42] Kosyk, Wolodymyr, The Third Reich and Ukraine, (New York: Peter Lang, 1993), p. 6.

[43] Vakar, p. 103.

who occupied most of Ukraine in February 1918. It was replaced by a quasi-monarchial regime under Pavel Skoropadskyi, who, in turn, was not secure enough to stay in power after the German troops withdrew after the armistice of November 1918. His government was replaced by the Ukrainian People's Republic, headed by Simon Petliura. He was able to secure the strong support of the peasants in western Ukraine, who were very receptive to the ideas that Ukrainian nationalism and independence could bring economic and social benefits to them. He wanted Ukraine to be left alone by all the sides involved in the conflict, so that it could establish the basis for its sovereignty. However, his regime had to struggle with the efforts of Communist, anti-Bolshevik and Polish forces, all of which attempted to extend their influence over Ukraine.[44]

Throughout this tumultuous period the Ukrainian intellectual and political leadership remained deeply split over the ideological issues. They failed to unite, and to win popular support. Ukraine finally lost in its struggle with the Soviet Russia, and following the Russo-Polish war was split between the two countries.[45]

Though Belarus was less affected by World War I, the war did impact the republic's subsequent political developments. After the defeat of the Austro-German armies the Belarussian government which was formed shortly after the revolution of 1917 fled from the republic's capital of Minsk. It represented a small group of Belarussian intellectuals, who became disillusioned in the possibilities of building Belarussian sovereignty under either Russian or Polish protection. Those leaders were hoping for the German support. However, there were other political parties in the republic who did not support the Belarussian government's ideas.

---

[44] Magocsi, Robert, A History of Ukraine, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1996), pp. 481-484.

For example, there was a faction in the government that still placed their hopes on Russia. They remained in Minsk, and with their support on January 14, 1919, the Belorussian Soviet Socialist Republic was proclaimed.[46]

As a result of the unfolding events of the Russo-Polish war, Belarus also went through several changes of government. When Belarus came under Polish occupation, the former government of the Belarussian People's Republic returned from abroad, just to flee in exile again after the signing of the Treaty of Riga, which concluded the war with Poland. Like Ukraine, Belarus was split into the western and eastern parts.[47]

Eastern Ukraine and Belarus after the developments described above found themselves under Communist rule. They were faced with near destruction of their nationalist movements. The newly formed Soviets of those republics branded any expression of nationalist sentiments as anti-Soviet, and brutally persecuted all who adhered to such beliefs. During the Stalinist repressions of the 1930s many Belarussian and Ukrainian intellectuals were either shot or sent to the GULAG, where they eventually vanished. Mass executions at Kurapaty and Vileyka in Belarus and the Ukrainian Famine of the 1930s also destroyed millions of lives. Many continue to believe that Ukraine especially was singled out for such brutal treatment.[48]

However, the Soviet government allowed certain elements of the nationalistic

---

[45] Ibid., pp. 14-15.

[46] Vakar, pp. 107-108.

[47] Ibid,. pp. 114-116.

[48] Marples, David R. Stalinism in Ukraine in the 1940s, (London: The Macmillan Press Ltd., 1992), pp. 20-22, and Belarus: From Soviet Rule to Nuclear Catastrophe, (Edmonton: The University of Alberta Press, 1996), pp. 12-14.

consciousness to exist in both Republics in order to secure at least some popular support, especially during the time of NEP. The economic conditions created by the New Economic Policy were very favourable in both Republics. This lead to a creative outburst in the areas of art and literature, which was perceived by many as an ethnic Renaissance. Unfortunately, it was short-lived, since the Soviet government did not approve of any dissident views and approaches. At the same time, there were some aspects of nationalism that fit into the Communist ideology. Many nationalist ideas calling for political and ethnic unity could successfully be employed by the Communist propaganda. Ukrainian and Belarussian traits and traditions were encouraged in scholarship, literature and art. Also, the education in both Republics after the revolution was conducted in the native languages. Thus, despite the severe damage done to the Belarussian and Ukrainian intellectual circles by the Stalinist repressions, the nationalists in both Republics were able to preserve and develop their languages and culture to a limited extent.[49] In terms of education, Eastern Ukraine and Belarus also made a considerable progress with the government-conducted campaign to stamp out illiteracy among the adult population as well as the introduction of a compulsory elementary education for the children. There was also a noticeable growth in the spheres of professional and technical education.[50]

Western Ukraine and Belarus, which fell under the Polish rule, were allowed certain political freedoms, but these were never enforced. Those nationalists that found themselves in Poland after the World War I certainly avoided physical destruction in the repressions that were

---

[49] Magocsi, pp. 563-567, and Lubachko, Ivan S., Belorussia Under Soviet Rule 1917-1957, (Lexington: The University Press of Kentucky, 1972), pp. 86-89.

[50] Lubachko, p.86.

raging in the Soviet Union. In reality, however, only those nationalists that were willing to collaborate with the Polish authorities were allowed to conduct their work among the Ukrainian and the Belarussian population. Those having dissident views were dealt with almost as brutally as in the USSR.[51]

For example, during the 1920s, Belarussian deputies to the Polish Sejm formed a political club known as *Belaruskaja Sialianska-Rabotnickaja Hramada*, or Belarussian Peasants' and Workers' Association. Their dedication to the Belarussian national ideal was not well received by the Polish authorities. The members of Hramada were accused of carrying out subversive Communist propaganda. In 1928 many leaders were arrested for treasonous activities. Later on the Polish government exchanged them in return for the Polish citizens arrested by the Soviets.[52] On the other hand, loyal Belarussians, also known as Polish collaborationists, were allowed to continue their activities for some time after this event. During the 1930s, however, political oppression forced into political exile even those who initially were willing to cooperate with the Polish authorities.[53]

The Ukrainians living under Polish rule were also repressed from 1919 on. Beside an unfruitful political struggle conducted by a handful of intellectuals who became the leaders of various political organizations, the Ukrainians also had to consolidate their energies to resist an intense Polonization, through the enforcment of the Polish language and Catholic religion. The Polish authorities attempted to slow down the increase of Ukrainian patriotism and clandestine activity by conducting "pacification" of the Republic. This policy included searches,

---

[51] Найдзюк, Язэп, і Іван Касяк, Беларусь учора і сяння: папулярны нарыс з гісторыі Беларусі, (Менск: «Навука і тэхніка», 1993), pp. 177-179.

[52] Vakar, pp. 126-127.

[53] Ibid., pp, 132-133.

confiscations, and even severe beatings of those suspected or found guilty.[54]

The Polish government conducted its most active attack in the area of education. Their goal was to Polonize the Belarussian and Ukrainian youth, and thus deprive them of their ethnic identities. In Belarus, a number of adult education centres were robbed off their assets and turned into Polish schools. The study of the Belarussian language in schools was resisted by the Polish authorities, and the Belarussian youth in the 1920s and 30s were faced with the choice of either going to the Polish schools or remaining illiterate.[55] Similarly in the Ukraine the Ukrainian schools were first replaced by bilingual schools, and later the attempts were made to transfer them into completely Polish schools. The number of the educational institutions available to the Ukrainians also significantly decreased with the introduction of the policy of "pacification".[56] Those measures, however, could not destroy the ethnic identities of the people in both Republics. In fact, the results of the "pacification" were opposite to what the Polish government intended to achieve. Under the repressions many ethnic Belarussians who were previously indifferent to the nationalistic propaganda became conscious of the national cause. In Belarus the groups were formed that were preoccupied with the Belarussian self-expression. In the Ukraine the association *Ridna Shkola* got actively involved in developing of private education.[57]

The state of affairs on either the Soviet or Polish side of the border provoked much

---

[54] Kosyk, p. 16.

[55] Vakar, p. 128.

[56] Kosyk, p.17.

[57] Vakar, p. 128, and Kosyk, p. 17.

bitterness among some circles of the local population towards their governments. The ethnically conscious Belarussians and Ukrainians came to understand that neither the Poles nor the Soviets would help them realize their hopes for better life or independence. However, when in 1939, acting upon the agreements reached in the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact, the Soviet troops invaded eastern Polish territories and Western Belarus and Ukraine were forcefully incorporated into the USSR. strong anti-Bolshevik feelings came into play in addition to the nationalistic sentiments.[58] Though the main wave of Stalinist repressions had passed by 1939, there was considerable cleansing conducted by the Soviets in the newly acquired territories. This furthered popular disillusionment with the Soviet State.[59]

In the mean time, Germany provided shelter for hundreds of political emigres from Ukraine and Belarus. There they had the opportunity to educate their children in their native language of instruction, form their own associations, and publish newspapers and books.[60] By providing the emigres with such favourable conditions, the Germans hoped to employ them in their future invasion of the USSR. Though numerous emigres were contacted and recruited for that purpose by the German administration, the Germans never fully explored all the possibilities of utilizing the nationalists to their advantage. Moreover, the Nazi developed only a limited plan for recruiting and using the indigenous population of the areas they were about to occupy. Even highly educated professionals among the emigres hired by the Germans were originally meant to

---

[58] Armstrong, John, Ukrainian Nationalism, (New York: Columbia University Press, 1963), pp. 46-47.

[59] Ibid., p 48.

[60] Loftus, John, The Belarus Secret, (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1982), p.17.

be employed only as advisors, guides, translators and informers.[61]

This lack of consideration towards the planning for collaboration with the indigenous inhabitants can be partially explained by the Nazi ideology. The German army led by the Nazis intended to pursue the centuries long idea of the *Drang nach Osten*, or *Drive East*, which involved conquest and colonization of the territories east of Germany. However, the Nazi idea of expansionism was radically different from that of its earlier proponents. It did not involve any provisions for the civilizing mission. Also, Germans were to abandon all the moral scruples in the attainment of their goals in the East, since the inhabitants of those territories were perceived as inferior by the Germans.[62]

In accord with these beliefs, Hitler and his party devised a plan for the future ethnic hierarchy in the East. On the top of that were placed the German settlers that were supposed to be eventually transferred to the East. They were followed by the *Volksdeutsche*, the ethnic Germans already living in the east, or the ethnic groups close to the German race, who could be easily assimilated. Below them were placed all the other non-Slavs, followed by non-Russian Slavs, namely the Ukrainians and Belarussians. The Great Russians occupied the second last place in this hierarchy, at the very bottom of which remained so-called "Undesirables". This final grouping included Jews, Gypsies and some other ethnic minorities, who were eventually supposed to be completely eliminated.[63]

---

[61] Dallin, p. 678.

[62] Ibid., p. 8.

[63] Ibid., p. 277.

Strongly believing in the Slavic inferiority, "Slavs are a mass of born slaves",[64] the Nazis did not perceive them as worth while allies in their plans for the conquest of the USSR. Moreover, they did want to assist the Ukrainians and the Belarussians in obtaining and securing their independence. Instead, all Slavs were to be deprived of any form of state organization and kept at a low cultural level. The German plans in the East consisted of the following:

> (1) the liquidation of those elements which, in the topsy-turvy scale of Nazi values, were proscribed as unworthy to survive; (2) the mass transfer of other 'inferior' elements eastwards; (3) the gradual assimilation of the 'better" non-German elements who would be permitted to remain; and (4) the settlement with German farmer and soldier immigrants of the spaces thus vacated.[65]

However, shortly after the invasion, several factors motivated the German military command to adjust their views and begin employment of the indigenous inhabitants of Ukraine and Belarus on a wide scale. Rosenberg, who was to take charge of the occupied Eastern territories, had somewhat different views of the Slavs than the Orthodox Nazis. He believed that only the Great Russians, and not all the peoples of the Soviet Union, were the real enemy. He insisted on a sharp separation between the Russians and other nationalities of the USSR, and stressed the importance of exploiting the separatist movements among these peoples.[66] These views of Rosenberg made it easier for the Germans to accept the cooperation with the local population during the occupation.

After accepting the idea of cooperation with the indigenous inhabitants, the Germans were very careful to ensure that those non-Germans in their occupation administration did not

---

[64] Hitler, A., Mein Kampf, cited in Dallin, p. 8.

[65] Ibid., p. 276.

[66] Ibid., p. 47.

present a threat to the German authority. In Ukraine where the nationalistic sentiment among the ethnic population was strong, and the population represented a significant force, the participation of the locals in occupation administrative tasks was narrowed to the community and rayon levels. It was important for the Germans to insure that they had the supervisory power over the local administration. In Belarus, the emigre administration was given someone greater power because they were not perceived as having strong influences in the region. The population of the Republic was considerably smaller than that of Ukraine, and "the poorly developed national consciousness of the Belorussians which was strongly suppressed under Bolshevik rule"[67] could hardy represent any threat to the Germans. Once the Germans felt that the indigenous collaborators could be kept under control, they could accept the idea of cooperation with these "inferior" Slavs.[68]

When the Germans invaded the USSR they were greeted as liberators by many nationalists in the Eastern territories.[69] This favourable response was another factor that made the idea of employment of the local population at the invaders' service even more acceptable for the Germans. On the other, not all of the population in the occupied USSR responded with support to the German occupation. There were also those who chose to resist the Germans. This, in turn, necessitated the employment of the loyal Ukrainians and Belarussians by the

---

[67] Waldman, Eric, "German Occupation Administration and Experience in the USSR", War Documentation Project, (Maryland: The John Hopkins University Operations Research Office, May 1955), p. 59.

[68] Ibid., p. 62.

[69] Howell, Edgar M. "The Soviet Partisan Movement 1941-1944," Department of the Army, World War II German Military Studies, August 1956, (New York: Garland Publishing, Inc., 1979), p. 52.

invaders, since their own forces could not effectively handle the resistance.[70]

The resistance to the invaders in the occupied regions could only be conducted by the unconventional methods. The partisan movement in the western USSR grew rapidly after the invasion. However, it is important to note that this movement was not as large as been often assumed. For example, Kuzmenko claims that in Belarus, where the partisan movement was the strongest in the occupied USSR, only about five percent of the population, approximately 400.000, was involved in struggle with the invaders. On the other hand, this seemingly limited force was able to take control of around 60 percent of the occupied Belarussian territory by the spring of 1943. Thus, the impact of the partisan struggle against the Germans should be evaluated carefully and in a balanced fashion.[71]

Another aspect that should be considered here is the fact that not all the people who retreated into the woods after the invasion were members of the same partisan movement. Many of them refused to support either the Soviet or the German cause; others were not pro-Soviet, but anti-German at the same time. Those belonging to the groups most likely to be targeted by the Germans, such as Communists or Jews, merely went into hiding, but were forced to fight when discovered.[72] Unfortunately, all the complexities of the partisan resistance are difficult to evaluate due to the lack of written records left by those groups. It is, however, safe to assume that already by the end of 1941 they began to gravitate towards the Soviet partisans. The main

---

[70] Ibid., pp. 52-54.

[71] Kuzmenko, pp. 101- 102.

[72] Ibid., p. 100.

reason behind that was that the Soviets could offer their partisans at least some of the necessary supplies, and provide them with the structure and organization that was needed for the effective actions against the enemy.[73] But even those who found themselves fighting with the Soviets often switched sides, depending on the circumstances around them. Captured guerillas were known to claim that they were forced into the movement against their will by the threats against them individually or against their families. Several of them would later return to the partisan forces and continue fighting on their side. The confusion that was created by instability in both partisan and collaborationist forces in the occupied zone did not allow for the full control of the population migrations in the area, and made such fluctuations possible. It was not always safe to do this, since either side could become suspicious of the motives behind those individuals who changed their loyalties. In the mean time, many guerillas were known to get away with switching sides quite successfully.[74]

The brutality with which the Germans treated the population of the occupied territories contributed to the growth of resistance, and the partisan movement in particular. The groups that the Nazis intended to eliminate immediately after the invasion were the Soviet officials that were left in the occupied zone, along with all Communists and Jews. Though local inhabitants might have not sympathised with those groups on ideological or ethnic grounds, inhuman executions of those people outraged the native population.[75] Another factor that contributed to the popular

---

[73] Липило, П. П. Непокорённая Белоруссия, (Москва: Военное издательство Министерства Обороны СССР, 1963), pp. 199-200.

[74] Golubovich, L., "Belarussian Collaborationist Military Forces" [Белорусские колаборационные вооружённые силы], Alexander Dallin's Papers, (Stanford: Hoover Institution Archives), Box 6, Folder 3, pp. 40-41.

[75] Armstrong, John, Soviet Partisans in World War II, (Madison: The University of

disillusionment with the occupiers was the economic crisis and deterioration of the living conditions that followed the invasion. The inhabitants of the occupied USSR were hopeful that with the establishment of the German order much hated collective farms would be destroyed, and the land, stock and the agricultural equipment would be evenly distributed among the local inhabitants, who would then become free farmers. However, the Germans kept the collective farm structure in many areas, since the organized production of the agricultural products was more easily managed that way. Generally,

> "in terms of long-range goals, [the Nazi leadership] utterly disregarded popular aspirations; in terms of immediate demands, it assumed that the war's victorious conclusion within a matter of weeks or months allowed the occupiers to ignore the problem of popular allegiance."[76]

In its first stage which began immediately after the German invasion the Soviet partisan movement consisted of remnants of the units established by the Soviet authorities and citizens loyal to the USSR. At this stage the partisan bands acted independently of one another, and thus represented no immediate military value. During the next stage, which began in December of 1941, there was a noticeable increase of the partisan force. This numerical expansion came from the survivors of 1941, as well as the men transported from the Soviet side through the gaps in the front.[77]

Initially, the Germans were able to inflict significant damage on the partisan force. All

---

Wisconsin Press, 1964), pp. 320-321.

[76] Ibid., p. 321.

[77] War Documentation Project Staff, "The Soviet Partisan Movement in World War II: Summary and Conclusions", Project "Alexander," General Series, volume 2, (Alabama: Air Research and Development Command, January 1954), pp. 1-2.

the Nazi plans for the management of the occupied territories were built around the assumption that the war was going to be won in a matter of a few months. These plans made almost no provisions for fighting the unconventional partisan war. Though this fact seemingly put the underground fighters at an advantage, poorly structured and organized bands could not offer significant resistance to the invaders, and thus had little immediate military value.[78]

However, the German provisions for the anti-partisan warfare were not thought out enough. They needed to make several adjustments to their planning as the third stage of the partisan resistance approached in the summer of 1942. During this stage the partisans were able to acquire even greater strength from the local support, and establish an organizational framework that allowed them to conduct large scale operations. For example, a series of operations known as "rail war" inflicted serious damage on the German communication system, and forced the Germans to look for new ways to strengthen their forces in the occupied territories.[79]

The situation on the Eastern front lines was yet another factor that drove the Nazis into recruiting local collaborators into their ranks. In the summer of 1941 the Germans were rapidly advancing into the Soviet territory. Their *Blitz krieg* was almost too fast, which put a strain on their supply lines. Also, unwilling to miss the opportunities presented to them by the retreating Soviet army, the Germans unnecessarily tired out their forces. A larger rotation of the troops was thereby needed in order for the army to remain effective, and this required increased numbers of

---

[78] Howell, p. 26.

[79] War Documentation Project Staff, p. 3.

men fighting on the eastern front.[80] Such conditions limited the size of the forces that could be left in the occupied territories to maintain the order. The invaders had to send every soldier available to the front, therefore, the numbers of Germans in the occupied region had to be decreased. The only way to replace them was through the employment of an indigenous population willing to collaborate.[81]

Already during the period of German advances in 1941-1942 the Nazis realized that there had to be a change in their tactics. New anti-partisan tactics were designed, and were based on the assumption that in order to win in this struggle, the Germans would have to be as mobile as the partisans themselves. More attention was now given to reconnaissance, since the accurate information on the location, strength, composition, armament and mission was supposed to help the Germans make the best use of a limited number of troops.[82]

Changes on the front in early 1942 put the occupiers in even more difficult circumstances. When the German troops were nearing Moscow, the Soviet government ordered a stop to the retreat. This threw the Nazis into even more fierce fighting, since the enemy now offered more serious resistance. The approaching winter also contributed to a weakening of the German forces on the Eastern front. This not only slowed down the German advance, but also shifted the advantage to the Russians. The German supply line was stretched almost to the limit. They were faced with unfamiliar terrain and severe weather conditions, for which they were almost

---

[80] Howell, pp. 30-32.

[81] Ibid., p. 65.

[82] Ibid., p. 68.

completely unprepared, and exhausted by long months of fighting. In this situation, the Russians were able to gain certain tactical successes, and put the Germans on the defensive.[83]

The Russians thus began preparations for the counterattack, which became a great success at the walls of Stalingrad. It involved not only thorough military planning, but also well thought out propaganda campaign. By this time "Germany had become Public Enemy Number One"[84] in the eyes of the Soviet people. This helped the Soviets to consolidate their resources to carry out a successful operation. The German army was encircled at Stalingrad and exposed to the enemy attack on all sides. In November of 1942 their situation was desperate, and the results of this battle were catastrophic. It was the first serious defeat to both German military forces and their morale. The German fiasco at Stalingrad became an important stage on the road to the allied victory. It became a major turning point in the course of World War II as a whole, since it prepared necessary conditions for the Soviet counterattack, and for the more active actions of the allies on all the other fronts of the war.[85]

The defeat at Stalingrad began a period of Soviet offensives in 1943. Despite the fierce resistance of the Nazis, the Soviets were able to start pushing them back, and had gradually liberated all of the occupied territories of their country by the summer of 1944. This required more and more of the German resources, both human and material, to be put into action on the Eastern front. Their supplies by this time, however, were nearly completely drained, and the army reserves had no more well-trained soldiers available to fight the war. The Germans,

---

[83] Ibid., p. 35.

[84] Dallin, p. 142.

[85] Гречко, А. А., v. 5, pp. 193-195.

pressured on the front, and debilitated by the desperate struggle with the guerillas, realized that their cause was doomed and began a chaotic retreat westwards, thus bringing an end to the Nazi occupation.[86]

It was in this crucial period from the winter to the summer 1942 that the Germans began seriously to consider the employment of the indigenous population in almost every area of life in the occupation zone. They were especially motivated by the belief that the recruitment of the local inhabitants would free German troops "for front-line service at a time when partisan activities were increasing and there was a shortage of German military personnel."[87]

The employment of the native population in administration and public safety tasks was a common practice in military governments. Most Western armies developed plans for utilizing, under a close supervision, existing police and administrative organizations. The Germans initially failed to make provisions for that, since it was contrary to their aims of colonization of the Eastern territories. Moreover, they did not expect that the infrastructure existing under the Communist system would subscribe to their cause, since the Soviet government recruited only the most loyal and reliable personnel in all the important military and civil institutions. Thus, the enrollment of the indigenous people into the occupation administration and German military forces was largely an improvisation on the Nazi part.[88] Nevertheless, this question was explored very seriously. The importance awarded to it was stated in the communications from the Reich

---

[86] Howell, p. 132-133.

[87] Waldman, Eric, "German Use of Indigenous Auxiliary Police in the Occupied USSR: The *Ordnungsdienst* (OD) in Army Group Center: A Case Study in the Utilization of Soviet Nationals for Security and Public Safety Tasks", War Documentation Project, (Maryland: Johns Hopkins University, May 1955), p.1.

[88] Ibid., p. 10.

Ministry for the Occupied Eastern Territories to the Reich Commissar Ukraine and the Reich Commissar *Ostland* in February 1943:

> The lack of German manpower and the necessity of drawing more and more upon the population to participate within the framework of the German Armed Forces in the fight against bolshevism make it mandatory to search for ways and means by which the indigenous population can better cooperate in the process of reconstruction of the country as well as in the administration proper.[89]

Along with the emigres that came to the Eastern territories with them, the Germans began utilizing the indigenous administration. The former political subdivisions of the USSR on the lower level - *raions*, village communes, villages, and cities - were retained. However, the administrative offices at the District (or *Oblast*) level existed only in the early stage of the military occupation, and later were made superfluous. The clerks working in those institutions found that the organization almost completely resembled the old Soviet system. This was advantageous for Soviet citizens who quickly adapted to new rules. The exceptions were made in cases when the extant of the partisan movement required more military officers present within on rayon. Then the former Soviet *Raion* was divided into several *raions*. Similarly, when the local offices of military government could not be formed because of lack of German personnel, the *raions* were combined.[90]

One of the significant changes introduced by the Nazis concerned the assignment of responsibilities to individuals. Soviet rule, by contrast, had stressed the principle of the collective responsibility. The Germans found this arrangement unsuitable for the occupation

---

[89] Waldman, Eric, "German Occupation Administration and Experience in the USSR", pp. 56.
[90] Ibid., p. 48.

zone, since it allowed individuals to hide behind the backs of their comrades, and not receive punishment for any wrong doing. Thus, the Germans introduced the principle of individual responsibility in order to ensure the full loyalty of their employees.[91]

By 1943 the Germans already could accept the idea of hiring the native Slavic population in the higher echelons of the administration. In Belarus, the nationalistic sentiments of the people in both rural and urban communities were supposed to be encouraged with the creation of the Belarussian Central Council, a provisional government run by native Belarussians under the German protectorate. This organization was short lived, and in its action limited in time, and resources. However, the important achievement of this office was the creation of the Belarussian Country Defence forces. This military force resembled the Belarussian national army, and had as its goals the destruction of Bolshevism on their land. However, in Ukraine, the conditions of military reversals and retreats did not allow for similar organization patterns. The Germans enforced much stricter control over the Ukrainians, and did not allow the indigenous administration much autonomy, since ethnic Ukrainian population was much greater and could present a significant threat to the German power in the area.[92]

Already on July 5, 1941, the commander of the Army Group Rear Area began enlisting indigenous inhabitants to increase his security forces. In the course of war those units, known as *Ordnungdienst*, (OD), represented a large auxiliary force for important security assignments. They were employed not only to keep peace and order, but also to enforce certain orders and

---

[91] Ibid., pp. 46-50.

[92] Ibid., p.48-50.

administrative regulations.[93] The OD units rapidly grew, as the security issues became more pressing under the pressure caused by frequent partisan attacks. [94] In the spring of 1942 some major organizational changes were brought into the structure of the OD, as it became subordinate to the official in charge of the highest level of the indigenous administration. This provided for the greater flexibility in use of the OD units. The OD became increasingly involved in anti-partisan warfare, and this called for the creation of separate units specifically dedicated to that function. Also, the expanding OD forces were supplemented by a criminal police detachment, political police detachment as well as by another regular police detachment. This arrangement had noticeable advantages for the Germans, who at this stage began exploring the possibilities of using the indigenous troops on a wider scale.[95]

The loyalty expressed by the OD guard units towards the invaders prompted the Germans to begin utilizing the native inhabitants in other areas of military service. There were also instances where the OD guards became unreliable and contacted the enemy. Some of the OD members exploited the possibilities for the future cooperation with the Soviets in case of their victory. However, according to Waldman, it has been consistently shown that such behaviour was a result of improper treatment received from the German supervisory personnel.[96] In the mean time, all the members of OD were generally exposed to propaganda by the Soviet partisans, which used everything from promises to threats in order to win the youth over to its side.

---

[93] Waldman, "German Use of Indigenous Auxiliary Police in the Occupied USSR", p. 8.

[94] Ibid., p. 17.

[95] Ibid., pp. 23-24.

[96] Ibid., p. 46.

The propaganda was conducted by the partisans with a goal of persuading the OD units to desert and join them in their struggle against the invaders. It often took forms of the appeals to collaborators, and the appeals of former collaborators. The partisans stressed that the new German masters themselves did not trust those who willingly became the traitors to their motherland. They even made attempts to demonstrate in practice how little the Germans valued the lives of the OD unit members. According to a report of the Commander of Heeresgebiet Centre, the partisans were able to capture two German soldiers, whom they offered to exchange for OD men. The offer was refused. However, had the Germans accepted the offer, the partisans would have demonstrated a very strong propaganda point.[97] Even though Soviet propaganda did not succeed in provoking mass desertion and sabotage in the OD units, it still negatively affected the discipline and morale of the indigenous auxiliary units. The Germans undertook their own countermeasures in terms of propaganda, but they also failed to achieve a great success, as the desertions among the OD men continued.[98]

These were the main collaborationist organizations that existed in the occupied zone during World War II. Though the Nazis did not make serious provisions for the employment of the indigenous population at their service, they were forced to work with them once put in a harsh circumstances by the situation on the Eastern front and the growing partisan movement. Several miscalculations on the German part in the areas of the military and political planning had a fatal impact on the Nazi ambitions in the East. However, despite the lack of pre-war planning, the Germans were able to form, train and utilize significant indigenous forces in the occupied

---

[97] Ibid., p.69.

[98] Ibid., p. 70.

territories.

The popular response to the German invasion of the Soviet Union in 1941 consisted of a variety of different reactions. Some of them took an active form, fighting either the Soviets or the Germans or both. Others remained passive throughout the war. This multitude of responces was to a large degree determined by the pre-war experiences of the various groups of the population. Some people continued to support the Soviet government, others chose to collaborate. Yet there was no clear division into pro-Soviet and pro-German supporters. Many people changed their loyalties during the war. There were also groups that supported neither side during the entire conflict. People chose their positions during the war based on a variety of reasons. Examination of the motives of the members of the *Schutzmannschaft* battalions for joining the German force will help us understand some of the reasons behind the collaboration.

III. *SCHUTZMANNSCHAFT* BATTALIONS: FORMATION AND STRUCTURE OF COLLABORATIONIST MILITARY ORGANIZATIONS IN THE OCCUPIED USSR

The employment of the indigenous personnel for various tasks, mainly for public safety, is a well-established policy of any military government. The German command initially chose not to follow this practice in the East, since their plans for colonization of the Eastern territories and enslavement of its population excluded this possibility. However, very early in the war the invaders realized that there was a need to supplement their forces with the volunteers from the local population. The shortages in manpower that resulted from the lack of thorough planning and the demands of the Eastern front forced them to accept a new course of action in the USSR.[99] The Nazi leaders understood the necessity of having a certain supplementary military force in the occupied territories. It would help existing German security formations maintain order on the local level. This job did not require a high level of security clearance. Therefore, the Germans accepted the possibility of hiring indigenous recruits to carry out those functions.[100] Initially, the invading army planned to employ the local police formations which the retreating Soviet administration left behind during the initial stages of the occupation. Those forces were very slim, since the majority of the Soviet police retreated together with the authorities early in the summer of 1941. Their employment involved certain risks for the occupiers because many members of the former Soviet police might have retained their loyalty to the Soviet government. Therefore, the Germans had readily available to them forces to carry out policing functions in the

---

[99] Waldman, "German Use of Indigenous Auxiliary Police in the Occupied USSR", p. 10.

[100] Vakar, p.180.

occupied territories. Soon they discovered that these forces were far from satisfactory and proceeded to supplement them with the locally raised militias and self-defence units.[101]

Nazi leaders had, already before the war, considered the possibility of employing the indigenous population. However, the provisions made for implementing this practice in the USSR were extremely limited. The realities of the war actually demanded that the local forces be utilized on a much wider scale than was initially intended. The importance and usefulness of the services of local collaborators to the Germans grew together with increasing difficulties and need for manpower both at the front and in the rear.[102]

From the very beginning of the war a number of anti-Soviet groups in the USSR willingly collaborated either in the hope of acquiring special privileges, such as better food and housing, or the destruction of the Communist regime in the USSR. Also, some Soviet army officers who had been captured by the German army hoped that their lives would be saved if they collaborated.[103] Various groups of potential collaborators intended to gain something from their service to the Germans, and many of them had well-defined expectations even prior to the invasion. One of their desires was to have their own military forces that would work in accordance with the Germans, but also protect their own interests.

However, the German racial theory prevented them from permitting the *Untermenschen* to have any kind of independent force. Instead, they only allowed them to serve as auxiliaries to the German Army, Police, and SS. The German military administration officers, however,

---

[101] Thomas, Nigel, and Abbott, Peter, Partisan Warfare 1941-1945, (London: Osprey Publishing Ltd., 1983).

[102] Ibid., p. 10.

[103] Vakar, p. 180.

repeatedly stressed in their writing and correspondence that this was done only because and when the circumstances forced them to do so.[104] Western historiography of the early post-war and Cold War periods consistently points out that this was one of the major mistakes of the Germans in the USSR. For example, John Armstrong claims that had the Germans been willing to recruit the indigenous population early in the war, they could have many more effective units. The time of the occupation before serious recruitment of the local population began allowed the partisan movement to form, and took away many forces that the Germans could have utilized otherwise.[105] It took the Germans about five months to grasp the importance of anti-partisan organization involving the local population. Dixon and Heilbrunn, for example, believed that wider utilization of indigenous forces and more directed anti-partisan police were common sense requirements that the German command had overlooked.[106] They argue that the local population was most suitable for unconventional methods of warfare because of their awareness of the local traditions and knowledge of the area.[107]

Finally, the German leaders found acceptable the idea of employment of the *Untermenschen* in the military service by 1942. They proceeded to implement whatever limited policies they had quite successfully, adjusting them according to the demands of the situation. One of the factors that brought this about were the changes in the German plans of invasion as a result of the course of the war. For one, the Red Army's success near Moscow and at Stalingrad

---

[104] Thomas and Abbott, p. 5.

[105] Armstrong, 1964, p. 28.

[106] Dixon and Heilbrunn, p.112.

[107] Ibid., p. 146.

prevented further movement of the German troops according to pre-war plans, and forced a rethinking of all previously outlined occupation policies. Moreover, faced with variety of customs and traditions in different occupied areas, the invaders needed to change their policies to suit the situation in a particular locale.[108]

Thus, the German occupation of the Soviet territory varied greatly in the different parts of the USSR. The Baltic states were under German rule from the summer of 1941 to 1944, and in some areas even until 1945. Belarus was under occupation from the summer of 1941 until the middle of 1944. Ukraine presented even more complicated case, where parts were occupied from the summer of 1941, but the eastern areas were not under the German rule until 1942. Parts of Ukraine were lost to the Soviet forces and re-occupied and held through 1943 and early 1944. Crimea was under the occupation from the middle of 1942 until the middle of 1944. The north Caucasus region was ruled by the Germans from August 1942 to January 1943. The regions of Russia were under occupation for different periods of time from the fall and winder of 1941 until the spring of 1944.[109]

This chaotic situation, together with the growing partisan resistance, slowed down the transfer of the authority from the military to the civil administration in the occupied East.[110] The partisan resistance units were generally assumed to be Communist-led bands because the Communists provided some of the most determined anti-fascist fighters.[111] However, this

---

[108] Waldman, "German Use of Indigenous Auxiliary Police in the Occupied USSR", pp. 8-9.

[109] Ibid., p. 9.

[110] Thomas and Abbott, p. 9.

[111] Ibid., p. 3

situation was far more complicated. There were also several other resistance groups that tended to hate the Communists as much as they did the fascists. They fought both the occupation troops and the partisans. This added to the complexity of the situation for the Germans early in the war. Later, towards the early part of 1943, those resistance groups were drawn into alliances with either the Communist or the German troops, and the warring sides became far more unified.[112] Fierce partisan resistance that the invaders met in the USSR required more manpower than the German command had initially allocated to the occupied territories. The nine Security Divisions were assigned to the USSR. They were formed out of middle-aged reservists and, therefore, were from the beginning inadequate for their task. Moreover, late in 1942, their best combat elements were sent to the front lines and the occupation security forces had to be reinforced by the Reserve and Field Training Divisions.[113]

Therefore, the forces were made out of the indigenous volunteers, which were initially prohibited by Hitler, and became important and grew in size for the following reasons:

> a) The relatively small number of German security troops assigned originally to the Commander of the *Heeresgebiet* [Army Group Rear Areas]. (This deficiency of troops became worse as the war progressed and more and more of these security units were used for front-line service.)
> b) The increase of partisan activities in the areas to the rear of the combat zone.
> c) The necessity to rely on indigenous manpower because of the shortage of German personnel created by an over-extension of forces throughout Europe and by increasing war losses.[114]

---

[112] Ibid., pp. 3-4.

[113] Ibid., p. 7.

[114] Waldman, "German Use of Indigenous Auxiliary Police in the Occupied USSR", p. 11.

The changes that were brought in by the Germans in these circumstances often affected even their most prestigious forces. For example, the elite gendarmerie established to police the conquered territories, the SS, was gradually absorbed by the *Waffen*-SS, and only a few brigades and cavalry regiments remained for security duties, which involved preservation of civil order in the occupied areas. These formations were later reinforced with the Baltic and Ukrainian recruits, though the commanding power of the security effort remained with the Higher SS and Police Leaders and their Security staffs.[115]

One of the former participants in the collaborationist forces, who composed a report about the collaborationist forces in the course of preparing the Project Alexander by the US Army, V. Golubovich, identified three phases in the history of the collaborationist forces during the war, which, according to him "fought on the German side against bolshevism during the period between 1942 and 1945."[116] The first phase began in 1941, when the Germans were convinced of their military superiority over the Soviet Army, and did not even accept the idea of having any kind of military organization involving indigenous population. The only formations that were allowed to exist were supposed to be strictly limited to the police functions. During this phase the collaborators were not allowed to carry weapons, or wear uniforms. They had no military command structure, and could not act freely without the approval of the local German military commanders. Only from the second half of 1942, when the Soviet Army was able to show serious resistance to the Germans on the front and the partisan movement started forming in the German rear, did the occupiers reorganize the existing police forces into two organs: one

---

[115] Thomas and Abbott, pp. 6-7.

[116] Golubovich, p. 3.

was supposed to fight criminal activities in the occupied territories. (*Sieherggeiswahtschtele*. or *Siewa*); the other was the *Ordunungdienst*. intended to combat the partisan activities.[117] During this phase the auxiliary police forces grew significantly, and by the spring of 1943, made up a large percentage of the German security forces engaged in anti-partisan warfare. The advantages of utilizing the local population in policing functions and in fighting partisans became more apparent to the Germans as many of those units proved themselves in combat. They were well acquainted with local conditions, knew the area, and could obtain much valuable information because of their local contacts.[118]

The second phase of the development of the collaborationist forces began at the end of 1943. During this stage a number of additional collaborationist organizations were formed and were reorganized in order to create a uniform army.[119] The third phase started in June of 1944, when the Germans, pushed by the Red Army, were forced to leave the occupied territories of the USSR and retreat to the West. During this stage the collaborationist formations were incorporated into the German regular army units, and continued fighting until the German capitulation was signed in May of 1945.[120] In all these phases, the German army went through a confusing process of adjusting and readjusting their plans to the realities of the occupied Soviet territories.

Since the war in the East involved diverse political and ideological elements, Nazis had to

---

[117] Ibid., pp. 3-4.

[118] Armstrong, 1964, pp. 228-229.

[119] Golubovich, pp. 4-5.

[120] Ibid., pp. 6-7.

ensure that the volunteers who joined the auxiliary police formations would be loyal to them. Therefore, *Einsatzkommndos* of the Security Police were supposed to conduct careful screening of employees in order to avoid the inclusion of politically unreliable elements.[121] The first tactic was to employ those local inhabitants who were of the German origin, or who sympathetically looked at Germanization. In forming the auxiliary police forces the question of Germanization appears to play an important role. Even though the Germans no longer believed that the *Untermenschen* could not serve in their forces, since they needed any manpower they could get, they attempted to explain such need from the point of view of their racial theory. Many of the groups that were recruited as auxiliary were considered to be suitable for Germanization. There were over 300,000 ethnic Germans living in Ukraine, and as early as 1940 the Germans began through various agents forming training units for Ukrainians.[122] Later on, under the pretence that they were still aiming only at the ethnic Germans, they began enlisting ethnic Ukrainians as well. Many of the members of auxiliary battalions were initially classified under Class III of the *Volksliste*, a manual for determining suitability for being assimilated. According to the definition this class included aliens whose nationality was not clear, but who on account of their ethnic and cultural ties drew them towards all things German.[123] By 1943 this regulation was strengthened, and it was decided that Ukrainians could be considered for Germanization, but based on individual cases. If any person should be considered to be fit for Germanization, they should be

---

[121] Waldman, "German Use of Indigenous Auxiliary Police in the Occupied USSR", p. 14.

[122] Armstrong, 1963, p. 73.

[123] Kamenetsky, Ihor, Secret Nazi Plans for Eastern Europe: A Study of Lebensraum Policies, (New Haven: College and University Press, 1961), p. 94.

put under Class IV of *Volksliste*, and granted provisional citizenship, which could be cancelled at any time.[124] This category included all members of the local forces. Therefore, the very entry into the force gave a promise of a better life after the anticipated German victory. Even so not every Ukrainian who joined the auxiliary police forces was considered suitable for assimilation into the German culture. Germanization of Ukraine was very limited and applied on a larger scale to the Baltic republics, and ethnic German population within the Slavic republics of the USSR.[125]

The Germans utilized screening towards other kind of recruits to *Schutzmannschaft* battalions. They were generally put through a very strict six month trial period when they were carefully supervised and checked for suspicious activities. If their performance proved to be satisfactory during this time period, they were enlisted into one of the sections of *Schuma*. However, a poor record during the trial period could lead to severe penalties, including death.[126] The caution that the Germans had towards the indigenous people at first became less significant with time, when many member of the auxiliaries were able to prove themselves in military operations. Many of these men were considered to be alert and always ready to fight, and some of the auxiliary police members were willing to do more than the Germans expected of them, in order to advance their career long term or to gain immediate advantage.[127] Still, the occupiers realized the need for close supervision of the local auxiliary forces in action. Members of the

---

[124] Ibid., pp. 94-95.

[125] Ibid., p. 96.

[126] Cooper, p. 117.

[127] Schulte, Theo J., The German Army and Nazi Policies in Occupied Russia, (Oxford: Berg Publishers Ltd., 1989), p. 147.

auxiliary police battalions in combat often forgot of the optimal goal of the military encounter and instead engaged in personal revenge.

> Operations against partisans should, however, be undertaken only under German command, an observation made all over the area of Army Group Center; otherwise, as it was observed again and again, such enterprises either degenerate into military games (*Soldatenspielerei*) or lead to wild [and] aimless shootings...[128]

It was also reported on a number of occasions that though the auxiliary police achieved significant success in anti-guerilla warfare, they as a rule feared the Red Army troops, and when encountering them, usually took to flight. Though the Germans interpreted this as mere cowardice when faced with a real battle, it probably was more likely that the collaborators feared retribution by the Soviet authorities if they were recognized. Also, during the encounters with the regular army the possibility of being taken as a prisoner of war and executed for treason greatly increased.[129]

The newly formed units needed to have a clearly defined status. They were initially called *Hilfspolizei*. Already in August of 1941 the Commander of *Heeresgebiet* Center issued an administrative directive stressing that the Germans did not want to create indigenous units with police responsibilities, and the name of these units was changed to *Ordnungsdienst*, usually abbreviated as OD.[130] These were not to be confused with the units that were recruited by the SS, which were to be called *Schutzmannshaften*. However, throughout the early stage of their existence there still was confusion about the various types of the indigenous units. The Germans

---

[128] Waldman, "German Use of Indigenous Auxiliary Police in the Occupied USSR", p. 50.

[129] Ibid., pp. 49-50.

[130] Ibid., pp. 14-15.

themselves applied this terminology loosely. For that reason various types of indigenous volunteer formations were often referred to under different names.[131]

In November 1941 all locally-raised forces in the *Reichkimmissariates Ostland* and *Ukraine* were organized into "Auxiliary Units of the German Police, or *Schutzmannschaft der Ordnungspolizei*, usually abbreviated as *Schuma*. Volunteers who joined these battalions generally had some combat experience or military or security training, since they were mainly former soldiers and policemen.[132] It is important to note, however, that the recruitment of the local volunteers into the German auxiliary units took place without any official authorization. The Army High Command saw this as a problem, but at the same time it recognized an important role that those units played for the Germans already during the first 14 month of the occupation. Therefore, in August 1942 it issued the directive that sanctioned retroactively the existence of the local collaborationist forces. The OD units now were given an official description:

> *Schutzmannschaften (Ordnungsdienst)* in the zone of operation: Into this category fall the *Schutzmannschaftsverbaende (Ordnungdienst)* employed locally in the zone of operations either as formations or as individual units, composed of indigenous men who joined voluntarily or of discharged prisoners of war of the occupied Eastern territories, and organized for police tasks or guard duties.[133]

It also increased and made official their pay scales, defined their functions, stressing their role as the anti-partisan force, and most importantly, it gave the official authorization for the future

---

[131] Ibid., pp. 16-17.

[132] Thomas and Abbott, p. 14.

[133] Waldman, "German Use of Indigenous Auxiliary Police in the Occupied USSR", p. 29.

utilization of the local manpower in military or paramilitary units.[134] Various German organizations in the occupied USSR later requested further re-organization of these units, claiming that separating them into more branches would allow the invaders to better train them for particular and very specialized tasks. However, the internal conflicts created by such propositions prevented the indigenous auxiliary police from any further significant changes in its structure.[135]

The *Schumas* were divided into four main branches. Regular policing duties in towns and countryside were assigned to the normal police or *Schutzmannschaft-Einzeldienst*. Anti-partisan fighting were carried out by the *Schutzmannschafts-Batallione*, which was commanded by a German officer and adjutant, and usually included some German soldiers in order to keep the forces in check. Professional and volunteer fire brigades were organized into the Auxiliary Fire Police or *Feuerschutzmannschaft*. Finally, Reserve Auxiliary Police, or *Hilfsschutzmannschaft* guarded POW camps and carried out labour duties. There were also various home guard organizations known as *Selbstschutz*, and some *Schuma* forces under the jurisdiction of the SD.[136]

The lack of a consistent policy prior to the war explains the constant reforms that were undertaken in the auxiliary police forces. Not only were the main structure and the names of the various branches often changed, but also the original units were constantly reorganized and incorporated into new formations. This trend became even more common toward the end of the

---

[134] Ibid., pp. 28-29.

[135] Ibid., pp. 33-37.

[136] Thomas and Abbott, p. 15.

war, when the Germans, desperate for any sort of the manpower, began sending some *Schutzmannshaft* battalions to the front lines. Those changes included not only putting together various indigenous units, such as Lithuanian and Ukrainian, but also the incorporation of non-German units into the regular German Army.[137]

The *Schutzmannschaft* forces included various ethnic groups of the USSR. There were 26 ethnic Estonian, 41 Latvian, 23 Lithuanian, 11 Belarussian, 8 Tatar, and 71 Ukrainian *Schuma* Battalions.[138] According to Thomas and Abbot, The Ukrainians were mainly driven by anti-Russian and anti-Communist sentiments and joined the German-sponsored forces in large numbers, and in late 1941 their number in *Schuma* was about 70,000. About half of them served in the anti-partisan battalions, which were raised at different times for anti-partisan duties. The rest of the Ukrainian *Schuma* were incorporated into the 30th SS-Division.[139]

The Germans utilized two main methods of recruitment: an appeal to the population to enroll voluntarily, or forced recruitment. Waldman states that of these, they generally relied on the first method through various propaganda methods, and the provision of incentives to those who were willing to join the Germans. It was believed that the majority of the volunteers would come from the anti-Bolshevik elements of the Soviet population, and therefore, would be more politically reliable.[140] They also believed that it was more effective to employ the recruits within

---

[137] Littlejohn, David, The Patriotic Traitors: A History of Collaboration in German-Occupied Europe, 1940-45, (London: William Heinemann Ltd., 1972), p. 322.

[138] Thomas and Abbott, pp. 15-16.

[139] Ibid., pp. 16-17.

[140] Waldman, "German Use of Indigenous Auxiliary Police in the Occupied USSR", p. 39.

their community, since they would be directly interested in maintaining order and preventing criminal activities in their own region. In addition, the Germans also occasionally recruited discharged POWs.[141]

Many in the German command recognized that many of the Soviet soldiers and officers captured in the war might be willing to cooperate with the Nazis for a variety of reasons. One of the important factors that motivated the POWs to cooperate was fear of death if they refused to work with the invaders. However, the Nazis also recognized that it was possible to find a number of ready supporters who would be genuinely loyal to them even among the captured soldiers, since a large number of those who were fighting in the Soviet army had suffered personally under the Stalin's rule.[142] The Germans were particularly careful while screening the prisoners of war, realizing that their loyalties might still be with the Soviet side. For that reason the commissars of the Soviet Army were immediately shot, and so were other members of the Communist Party of the USSR, if a proof of their party membership was discovered. Moreover, many other elements that held radical views, including some nationalists, were also considered "politically unreliable", and were also eliminated almost immediately after being captured.[143] Those who were found reliable enough were still not fully trusted, and in order to insure that they would be working with the Germans like they should, the Germans tried picking only those men out of the POWs whose families were living on the occupied territory. This was a way to apply pressure on those who would think of desertion or betrayal during their service in the auxiliary

---

[141] Ibid., p. 39-40.

[142] Thorwald, Jurgen, The Illusion: Soviet Soldiers in Hitler's Armies, (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1975), p. 109.

[143] Kosyk, pp. 141-145.

police.[144] Many of the POWs were utilized by the Germans in the positions were they could cause least damage to the German army, such as interpreters, cooks, drivers, and mechanics.[145] However, even in these jobs, individuals hostile to the Germany were able to inflict minor damages on the invaders, thereby reducing the effectiveness of the screening policy in many cases.[146]

The formation of the collaborationist forces was facilitated by the fact that in the occupied USSR the Germans found many people who were willing to collaborate. Initially the German political and military goals were not well known to the population of the USSR. However, some information found its way there and spread in the form of rumours. This meant that certain phrases often used by the Germans would be interpreted by the indigenous people according to their wishes. Hitler's attack on the Soviet Union was often perceived by the anti-Soviet elements in terms of common European struggle against bolshevism. The racial plans and policies of the Nazis were not widely known among the Soviet citizens at the beginning of the war.[147] One of the most popular terms used by Hitler was so-called "New European Order". The term was not clarified, and the people who deeply disliked the Soviet regime read into it what they wanted. They hoped that anything that the Germans initiated would be better than the situation in the USSR.[148]

---

[144] Thorwald, pp. 109-110.

[145] Mulligan, p. 148.

[146] Waldman, "German Use of Indigenous Auxiliary Police in the Occupied USSR", p. 40.

[147] Kosyk, p.101.

[148] Ibid., p. 102.

The German propaganda machine was also preparing the grounds for collaboration even prior to the invasion. Numerous Russian, Ukrainian, Belarussian and other emigre organizations in Germany and other European countries agreed to cooperate with the invaders, and through them the Germans were presented as "liberators" from Bolshevism.[149] Those appeals found favourable ground among many peoples of the USSR who had undergone political, ideological and ethnic oppression under the Stalinist regime. Ukrainian historian Kosyk claimed that Ukrainians were particularly receptive to those appeals, since they believed that they had suffered more than other peoples from Bolshevik regime. The Ukrainian famine played an important role in forming this kind of perceptions. Moreover, with the retreat of the Soviet Army the people discovered massacres of political prisoners, mass graves full of corpses, and torture chambers in numerous prisons. This strengthened their determination to join the Germans in what they believed was a struggle against bolshevism and ethnic oppression.[150]

Not all the Soviet citizens who joined the auxiliary police were motivated by a genuine anti-Bolshevik conviction. Many sought regular food rations, and privileges for their families and themselves by using their positions of authority. Many might have been hoping for long term advantages that might arrive from the changes in the system, such as hope for agrarian reform.[151] At the same time, joining the Germans in the fight might have involved a number of risks associated with the prosecutions that might come from the pro-Soviet partisans. The Soviets systematically attempted to terrorize, penetrate and propagandize the auxiliary police forces. The

---

[149] Ibid., p. 103.

[150] Ibid., p. 103.

[151] Waldman, "German Use of Indigenous Auxiliary Police in the Occupied USSR", p. 43.

Soviets saw in them a threat to their own war effort in two ways: first, of all they removed manpower that could have been available to fight the Germans; and secondly, it strengthened the anti-partisan fighting force.[152]

Some collaborators were driven by personal gain of any kind, whether moral, ideological, psychological or material. Kamenka observed that the phenomena of collaboration often involved an "enjoyment of [one's] own part in the activity, as a footballer might enjoy running and kicking, or the glory of being one of the winning team."[153] Many who joined the Germans as the auxiliary police were soon to be disappointed, as the Germans strictly regulated the amount of independence that they allowed the auxiliary police and all the other collaborationist organizations. The majority of collaborators were hoping to advance their own goals with the German help, and not to do exactly what the Germans wanted them to do. This conflicted with the German intentions, which, in the words of commissar Koch, were aimed at "making the Ukrainians work for Germany, and not at making the people happy."[154]

An important aspect of collaboration process involved the role played in Ukraine and Belarus by nationalist organizations. These groups realized shortly after the invasion that their hopes for complete or partial independence would not be satisfied by the invading army. Instead, they sought to gain certain advantages that would better the situation in their respective territory.

---

[152] Ibid., p. 58.

[153] Kamenka, Eugene, Ideas and Ideologies: Community as a Social Ideal, (London: Edward Arnold [Publishers] Ltd., 1982), p. 45.

[154] Reitlinger, Gerald, The House Built on Sand: The Conflicts of German Policy in Russia 1939-1945, (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1960), pp. 182-183.

However, in this disappointing situation, the collaborationist leaders could not agree on what would be the right course of action. In Ukraine, for example, two main approaches were already formed within the first weeks of the occupation. The first group consisted of radically and revolutionary-minded nationalists, and called for presenting the Germans with conditions for Ukraine's participation in the struggle against Bolshevism. They were willing to fight on the German side in return for Ukraine's independence. The second approach were proposed by more moderate groups and called for participation without conditions, hoping that the acceptable solution can be found after victory.[155] It is important to note that both groups did not question the decision to fight on the German side; they only differed on as to what they could get out of it.

The Germans formed the auxiliary police as well as the indigenous administration system in the manner generally favourable to Ukrainians. To an extent the Ukrainian policemen were given the power with which they could unofficially harass other nationalities, or use their position to gain additional favours from the local population.[156] Though some steps were taken by the Germans throughout the war to stay in favour with those groups, they rejected many important nationalistic demands concerning independence or autonomy of their territory. This furthered the disappointment in the Nazi ideas, and lowered morale in the auxiliary police forces, as well as prompted desertions.[157] Moreover, there were several groups of collaborators in Ukraine with Russophile, yet anti-Soviet tendencies. Where they were able to hold important posts in German administration system, it helped the Germans to control the administration and

---

[155] Kosyk, pp. 103-104.

[156] Armstrong, 1963, p. 53.

[157] Waldman, "German Occupation Administration and Experience in the USSR", p. 86.

auxiliary police as a channel of nationalist activity. Internal conflicts that were thus created, where the Ukrainian police used their position to terrorise non-Ukrainians, including ethnic Russians, Poles, Jews and Gypsies. This also played in the hands of the Germans who could claim that they were too preoccupied with restoring order to worry about the nationalistic demands of Ukrainians.[158]

Schutzmannschaft units were very vulnerable to Soviet psychological warfare. Though all the members of the collaborationist units were considered traitors, it was important for the Soviet government to attempt to win them back. This was done not as much as to strengthen the Soviet partisan forces as to prevent the Germans from utilizing this source of manpower.[159] The Soviet government directed its propaganda campaign at collaborators, stressing that there would be no retribution for treason if the collaborators returned to the Soviet side. Official Soviet policy from 1942 was to give the traitors an opportunity to "expiate their mistakes" by joining the partisans and proving themselves in combat.[160]

Some partisans who attempted to join the German occupation forces pretended to be the opponents of the Soviet regime in order to conduct intelligence work, as well as conduct propaganda among the members of the auxiliary police units. By doing so they served a dual purpose. On the one hand they were able to obtain the information on the workings of various German organizations, and place the informants in the auxiliary police who could warn the partisans about any moves against them. On the other, they could protect their own security by

---

[158] Armstrong, 1963, p. 217-218.

[159] Ibid., pp. 228-229.

[160] Ibid., p, 229.

sneaking in false information about partisan movements in the area.[161] Similar work was conducted among the local populace when the Soviet partisans were working in local communities in the attempts to create hostile attitudes towards the Germans among the civilian population of the occupied region. According to the German reports, the Soviets were quite successful in their actions. and were able to diminish the effectiveness of the police forces that way.[162]

Soviet propaganda conducted among the auxiliary police formations generally took the form of threats towards them. though there are also appeals to their patriotism and consciousness. In return of coming over to the partisan side they were offered guarantees of safety to themselves and their families:

> Come to us and fight with us against the common enemy of the Russian people, the Germans. However, if you continue to fight against us in the future as you hae up to now, then a merciless judgement is waiting for you. if not today. then tomorrow, [and] if not tomorrow, then the day after tomorrow.[163]

Another type of the Soviet propaganda spread among the auxiliary police ranks involved appeals of those who collaborated at the beginning of the war but later switched to the Soviet side. The Soviet agents stressed that partisans who repented of assisting the Germans would be humanely treated by Moscow. According to one account:

> After we had recognized our crime toward the fatherland. we decided to go to the partisans. At first we were afraid that the partisans would shoot us, but later we decided that it is better to be

---

[161] Ibid., p. 345.

[162] Waldman, "German Use of Indigenous Auxiliary Police in the Occupied USSR", pp. 60-61.

[163] Ibid., p. 64.

> shot by the partisans than to remain in the treacherous service and to kill our brothers, fathers, sisters, and mothers. We came with our weapons to the partisans and said: Do with us whatever you wish. We shall no longer serve the Germans. The partisans scolded us severely and said that they would give us an opportunity to make up for our guilt by fighting against the Germans.[164]

Some of the appeals were made personally to the former comrades of those who now joined the partisan side. These propaganda themes were constant, and they seemed to have produced good results. At least in part desertions that took place in the auxiliary forces can be attributed to such propaganda.[165] The Germans took many measures to counter such propaganda. They used their own propaganda, strict surveillance of the auxiliary police units through the employment of the indigenous informers planted in the auxiliary units, dismissal and punishment of unreliable personnel, and retaliations against the families of the deserters. One of the divisional orders, for example, demonstrates that:

> Families of the OD men who deserted to the partisans are as a principle to be arrested immediately and turned over to the Secret Field Police. After screening them this [agency] will initiate action assigning them to the labour camp at Gomel unless they are shot as accomplices. Their entire property is to be confiscated.[166]

Towards the end of 1944 when the Germans began their retreat from the Soviet territory, this propaganda weakened, and those collaborators who waited for too long to join the partisans were once again considered traitors and executed when captured. Under this pressure from the Soviet propaganda, many collaborators became even more disappointed with both sides of the conflict. Those who chose to stay and fight with Germany now knew all the risks that a return to

---

[164] Ibid., p. 66.

[165] Ibid., p. 69.

[166] Ibid., p. 70.

the Soviet side might involve. At the same time, they were becoming increasingly dissatisfied with the Germans, since their expectations of gaining long term advantages from cooperation with the invaders became more and more unrealistic, as the occupiers were retreating and could not be helpful in any fashion.[167] There were several expressions of dissatisfaction with the situation, a noticeable decline in morale, and even uprisings and mutinies. This situation required fast reaction on the part of the Germans, and it became one of the main reasons for the final reorganization of all the *Schutzmannschaft* battalions, and their incorporation into the regular German army. Such a reorganization was used as a propaganda tool, demonstrating that now, as the situation on the front was absolutely desperate, the Germans were willing to recognize the members of the auxiliary police battalions almost as equals, and allow them to fight side by side with the Germans. On the other hand, it also served as means of control, allowing the Germans to amalgamate various ethnic units with the Germans, who would not share any of their nationalistic views, and would inform the command of any plans for mutiny.[168]

In order to ensure full control of the situation and to be certain that the collaborators would not change loyalties while fighting, the Eastern volunteers were utilized in the regular army mainly on the Western front. That freed the German troops to fight in the East, and detached the Soviet volunteers from their homeland, making them more controllable through unfamiliar surroundings and increased propaganda.[169] However, there still were the situations

---

[167] Thorwald, p. 189-192.

[168] Ibid., p. 193.

[169] Ibid., p. 167.

where the collaborators were required to fight the people from their native villages or *raions*, and many, especially the fresh volunteers, refused to do so. Another difficulty that this transfer to the West created was that the collaborators now realized that they would gain nothing from their cooperation with the Nazis, and that they had been considered nothing more than mercenaries for Germany. However, with the events towards the end of the war unfolding rapidly, they could no longer demand anything, as the Germans had no way of satisfying any demands. They could not switch to the Soviet side, and thus many simply continued to follow the German orders out of desperation, since they had no other better choice. Now they were merely trying to survive.[170]

The auxiliary police units in the USSR were put in an ambiguous position by the circumstances around them. On the one hand, they were struggling for survival in the conditions where their own Soviet government freed itself of all the responsibility for its captured by the enemy citizens. At the same time they played an important role for the Germans during all stages of the invasion. Despite numerous problems associated with the employment of the indigenous population, the Nazis made considerable gains from hiring the Eastern volunteers. Though the full range of the uses of the collaborationist was not considered by the invaders prior to the war, the auxiliary police in the USSR by the end of the war grew into a significant and well-trained force, which could be utilized for both conventional and unconventional methods of warfare. It allowed them to send more German troops to the front, and gave them a military force members of which were familiar with the local customs and conditions. For many of the collaborators themselves, however, their wartime experience turned out to be a bitter disappointment. By the

---

[170] Ibid., p. 168-170.

end of the war they were put in the position where they knew they had nothing to gain from the Germans any longer, but could not return home because of their wartime activities. Having provided an overview for the structure and organization of the *Schutzmannschaft* battalions in general, it remains to be seen what the specific experience of the *Schuma* units was.

IV. WAR TIME EXPERIENCES OF THE *SCHUTZMANNSCHAFT* BATTALION 118

Historians of the collaborationist forces during the Second World War have largely focused on their confusion and disappointment. As a result, both Soviet and Western historiographies have denounced the collaborators as traitors and criminals, and condemned them for all their actions during the war. It is hard to deny that the members of the indigenous auxiliary police committed war crimes against civilians during their service for the occupation authorities. However, one should also consider the circumstances in which many of those people found themselves at the beginning of the war, and related motivation on their part in order to fully understand the phenomenon of collaboration. Although these circumstances would in no way absolve the *Schutzmannschaft* members from the responsibilities for the crimes committed, they might help us understand the history of occupation in more detailed and nuanced terms. For that purpose, a case study of the *Schutzmannschaft* battalion 118, also known as *Ukrainian Schuma*, may provide a better insight into the issue and explain several aspects of collaboration.

Many Ukrainians who joined the *Schutzmannschaft* battalions were former prisoners of war. Initially the POWs were subjected to the most brutal treatment, and numerous categories of them were exterminated. A month after the invasion, POWs of Lithuanian, Latvian, Estonian and Ukrainian nationalities were recognized as more reliable, as a result of their ideological disagreements with the Soviet government, and their correspondingly nationalistic hopes for the independence of their states. Some of them were freed by the Nazis for economic reasons, and were utilized in order to assure that all the necessary deliveries were received by the occupying

army. However, even those groups were to be kept under very close surveillance.[171]

The executions and exterminations of some Soviet POWs affected those who survived, and by 1942, the increased willingness of the Germans to utilize the indigenous population for their service coincided with the desperate wish of many Soviet POWs to survive. From this, enlistment either in the *Schutzmannschaft* battalions or into the eastern legions soon followed.[172] The first order creating indigenous military units was issued on October 6, 1941, and allowed formation of the first Cossack unit intended to combat partisans. Following that the invaders went on forming several other units, enlisting non-Russian Soviet POWs. By the beginning of 1942 employment of POWs for anti-partisan duties became a wide-spread practice. In total about 300,000 discharged POWs were enlisted into German-run security units.[173]

The auxiliary police recruited from the POWs were treated differently than the locally recruited battalions. According to the study of the German occupation records conducted by Waldman, those who enlisted in their locale were often motivated by the need for the preservation of order and protection in their area, and did not want to be removed from their families. These volunteers had the privilege of being stationed close to their homes. The Germans on a number of occasions stressed that the auxiliary police were mainly doing the service to their own communities, and not working for the invaders.[174] However, the situation in which the POWs found themselves was very different. They joined battalions in order to

---

[171] Kosyk, pp. 141-145.

[172] Ibid., pp. 144.

[173] Schulte, pp. 204-206.

[174] Waldman, "German Use of Indigenous Auxiliary Police in the Occupied USSR", p. 58.

survive, and for the most part came from various areas near and far. They were not united into groups by ideological considerations, places of birth, old kinship, or any other reasons. Thus the assignment of these men to their place of origin for service presented numerous difficulties. Indeed, it was a practically impossible task to accomplish. Moreover, they were least likely to disagree with German orders, since in many cases the service to the invaders was the only way for the POWs to survive. Therefore, it was easier and more acceptable to treat them merely as mercenaries and send them to any area that was in most need of manpower.[175]

The core of one such battalion, the *Schutzmannschaft* 118, was formed in Poland at the beginning of 1942. It was compiled of young Soviet officers who prior to the war had completed the course of officer training in a very short time, as the Soviet army desperately needed a replacement officer core. One of the Ukrainian units was led by the nationalist leader Wainatsky. This particular unit was moved from Eastern Poland to Kiev, where it was disbanded, and its members were distributed into other *Schutzmannschaft* battalions.[176] There the battalions had undergone further structural reorganization. The German command took several measures to make the membership in the *Schutzmannschaft* units more attractive to their members, and to ensure their loyalty. These measures mainly dealt with the assignment of privileges to the various groups within the *Schutzmannschaft* battalions. For example, on October 9, 1942, directives were issued giving special privileges to the members of the *Schuma*

---

[175] Kosyk, pp. 352-353.

[176] United States Holocaust Memorial Museum Research Institute Archives, (HMM), The Sara Rosjanski Donation – Selected Records from the Belarus Central State Archives, reel 3, fond 359, opis 1, folder 3, p. 4.

who spoke German and were considered especially loyal to the invaders.[177]

In Kiev, two large battalions, 115 and 118, were formed, which consisted mainly of ethnic Ukrainians. These new formations were subsequently transferred to Belarus, under command of von dem Bach, who was given the charge of anti-partisan operations in the occupied eastern territories on October 23, 1942.[178] At this time the German and collaborationist military strength in Belarus was estimated to be 160 thousand men in regular service. That did not include those units that were on a number of occasions temporarily transferred from the front or from the other territories to Belarus to aid in the anti-guerilla struggle.[179] Von dem Bach was able to consolidate the anti-partisan forces by March, 1943, and had a variety of resources available to him. He had one SS division, *Dierlewanger* special battalion, aviation unit, 5 police platoons, 19 police battalions, as well as gendarmerie, local police unit and other special groups at his disposal.[180]

At this time, partisan activities began to cause serious problems to the Germans, and the fighting continued with fierceness and brutality on both sides. The German command saw this as a serious problem and felt that the terms of the anti-guerilla fighting in the occupied USSR needed to be clearly stated. In 1943 it issued the order that was to resolve any confusion as to the conduct of the German and collaborationist soldiers in these conditions. The order explained that

---

[177] Ibid., fond 359, opis1, folder 3, p. 7.

[178] Ibid., fond 359, opis 1, folder 3, p. 5.

[179] Кузьмин, А. Т., Всенародная борьба в Белоруссии против немецко-фашистских захватчиков, (Минск: Институт Истории Партии про ЦК КПБ – филиал Института Марксизма-Ленинизма и издательство «Беларусь», 1983), t. 2, p. 173.

[180] Ibid., t.2, p. 33.

the German command was notified of the incidents where the German soldiers were initially punished for their extraordinary violent behaviour during the anti-partisan operations. It further claimed that in the territory of the USSR, the partisans were mainly "communist trained fanatics who are ready to use any kind of brutalities."[181] Therefore, the German command considered this to be a life and death struggle, and had nothing to do with the so-called proper war conduct or the Geneva convention agreements. Thus, from now on the army was given the right to use all the means necessary in this struggle, including the right to punish civilians, as long as it led to success.[182] The soldiers were urged not to feel any compassion towards the enemy, and it was ordered that

> No German participating in anti-partisan struggle should be disciplined or subjected to a tribunal for his actions while fighting the partisans or their supporters.
> Commanders of the units participating in the struggle with the partisan bands are responsible for notifying all the officers and their lawyers immediately and in convincing form about this order.
> No sentence be issued in contradiction to this order.[183]

This order thus set the conditions of anti-partisan fighting, and many of the actions that were taken by the German and collaborationist soldiers in the course of their operations in the occupied East were determined by it.

In the following month the Germans were engaged in the recruitment and extensive training of the new battalions. They mainly enlisted people from the ranks of labourers. The training of the battalions took place mainly in the outskirts of Kiev, where the older members,

---

[181] Липило, П. П. и В. Ф. Романовский, Преступления немецко-фашистских оккупантов в Белоруссии, 1941-1944, (Минск: «Беларусь», 1965), p. 65.

[182] Ibid., p. 65.

[183] Ibid., p. 66.

both German and Ukrainian, supervised the new recruits. As a result of all the preparations, the *Schuma* 118 consisted of three companies, armed mainly with captured Soviet weapons. They also possessed additional artillery, mortar, and heavy machine gun platoons. The Ukrainians wore former Latvian and Lithuanian military uniforms, and the German members of the battalion wore green police uniforms.[184]

In December of 1942, *Schuma* 118 was transferred, by train, to Minsk. For the first three weeks after their arrival they were engaged in repairing the barracks where they were supposed to be quartered. They also were fixing the roads in the area to improve the communication lines between various posts. Following that, anti-partisan operations became their main task.

The first area of operation of the *Schutzmannschaft* 118 in Belarus was in and around Pleshchenicy. The battalion moved there, and upon their arrival built barracks and guarded the road and main important communication points in town.[185] This region became their base of operations for the period until mid-1943. Following that, the battalion began moving towards the Berezina area, later actively participating in such major operations as *Cottbus*.[186] Their next operation point became the area north of Novogrudok, where the battalion was stationed until the beginning of 1944. In 1944 under the pressure of the advancing Red Army, the Germans began retreating from the occupied areas of the USSR. The *Schutzmannschaft* members realized the consequences they would have to face for their actions during the war if they stayed in the USSR

---

[184] HMM, fond 359, opis 1, folder 6, p. 12.

[185] Ibid., fond 365, opis 1, folder 5, p. 9, 15.

[186] Ibid., fond 359, opis 1, folder 3, p. 14.

and tried to return to their homes. They had no choice but to retreat with the Germans.[187] For the most part, though, the members of the *Ukrainian Schuma* were far separated from their birth areas and, therefore, were employed by the invaders merely as mercenaries. Thus, they behaved accordingly. Their main motives during the war were survival and, in some cases, ambitions of a military career in the German army: not protection and security of their communities as many later claimed.[188]

Placed under the general command of von dem Bach, the unit was created for anti-partisan warfare only, and thus was trained accordingly. However, the *Schuma* members also had to help meet the growing need for the local police personnel. On several occasions the unit conducted general policing functions in local communities in cooperation with the Gendarmerie units that were stationed in their area. When it was necessary, the *Schutzmannschaft* battalions were subordinate to the local *Ordnungdienst* units to carry out these functions.[189]

However, there were only a few incidents when the *Ukrainian Schuma* had to carry out police duties. Most of the time the *Schutzmannschaft* 118 was involved in the task it was trained for: anti-guerilla fighting. There existed a myth that the Soviets were extensively planning for guerilla warfare prior to the invasion. Many Germans believed that there was a connection between Communism and guerilla warfare. Moreover, in Russia there was a strong partisan tradition that could be traced back to the war with Napoleon. Partisan tactics played an important role during the Civil War of 1918-1920 in newly formed Soviet Russia. Russian revolutions

---

[187] See Appendix 1.

[188] HMM, fond 359, opis 1, folder 5, p. 3.

[189] Ibid., fond 359, opis1, folder 5, pp. 16-19.

provided the people with experience in conspiracy and underground work. Therefore, the invaders rightly anticipated that upon the invasion they would have to encounter unconventional forces and not only the regular army.[190] In the reality, there is not enough evidence to suggest that the Soviet government devised any sort of comprehensive plan for partisan warfare in the region. Even if such plans existed, they would have been kept secret because a suggestion that the government might need to employ guerillas in the course of war would undermine their belief in the strength of the Soviet Army, which would thereby have a demoralizing effect on the population.[191]

Partisan forces were also undergoing a number of developments during 1941-1942. Despite the realization that partisan warfare in the USSR was a very real possibility, the Germans overestimated their strength, and did not dedicate enough German forces to fight the partisans. In the occupied territories, German units mainly played a directing and supporting role. The main burden of anti-guerilla fighting was laid upon the indigenous units. The employment of local collaborators in these operations had some obvious advantages, since the indigenous men knew the terrain and were better able to establish many local contacts. However, at the same time this made the anti-guerilla forces more vulnerable to partisan propaganda. Also, many auxiliary police members had their families in the areas under partisan control, and could be influenced through that. This situation often resulted in instability and desertions, and definitely

---

[190] Armstrong, 1964, pp. 10-15.

[191] Ibid., p. 13.

lowered the effectiveness of the anti-partisan forces.[192]

The partisans in the USSR were supposed to conduct a "small war"in order to slowly damage the occupying forces. Their tactics included attacks on isolated German installations and units, disruption of communications, and sabotage of military facilities. In addition to that, partisans conducted an extensive propaganda campaign to win the support of the local population and demoralize the enemy.[193] Unlike the partisans of the Russian Civil War, the Soviet partisans of the Second World War were much better supplied and organized. Though the deliveries were irregular, the Soviet command supplied the partisans with weapons and equipment from the air. The partisans were able to publish their propaganda materials since they were supplied with printing presses and had nearly always regular paper deliveries.[194] Radio transmitters that were used by the partisans also played an important role in the guerilla fighting, since it provided a connection with the centre, and gave necessary information about the situation at the front. This helped strengthen partisan morale. Also, the radio transmitters helped communications between various partisan divisions during the major operations.[195] In response to that, the main techniques of the German anti-partisan warfare involved the use of small highly trained units who infiltrated the forests where the partisans were established. The Germans also put much effort into the maintenance of strong-points to guard main communication lines. Periodically

---

[192] Ibid., pp. 27-28.

[193] Ibid., pp. 14-15.

[194] Липило, p. 290.

[195] Ibid., pp. 332-339.

they engaged in large-scale efforts to encircle and comb the partisan forest strongholds.[196] Along with these tactics, the Germans engaged in numerous anti-civilian operations. They believed that the disruption of agricultural production would starve the partisans. Thus many fields were destroyed, cattle confiscated and villages burnt. Horrible atrocities were committed against women, children and the elderly. In the end, this tactic backfired as it caused the Germans to lose support of the local population. Towards 1943 the local inhabitants increasingly refused to cooperate with the occupiers and supported the partisans.[197]

Overall, the anti-partisan warfare, conducted by German directed indigenous units, was able to inflict significant damage on the local population and on the economy of the occupied region. However, in order to cause any serious disruption in the partisan movement, the main targets needed to be the partisan leadership cadres, since the rank and file guerillas could be indefinitely replaced. This objective was never achieved by the invaders. Thus their anti-partisan tactics in the occupied USSR were not highly effective.[198]

In 1943 the *Schutzmannschaft* 118 battalion was engaged mainly in anti-partisan combat. It participated in some major operations conducted by the Germans as well as in several minor engagements with the partisans operating in the area around Pleshchenicy. One of their first encounters with the partisans took place on January 6, 1943 in the village of Khmelevichy. It was a successful encounter for the *Schuma* side, since there were no loses reported as a result of this operation. Following the engagement, the battalion searched the village and found arms and

---

[196] Armstrong, 1964, pp. 27-29.

[197] Ibid., pp. 30-31.

[198] Ibid., pp. 38-39.

ammunition in ten homes. These houses were burnt down, and several other were looted.[199] This was later established as a general practice. Usually the villages suspected of having a connection with the partisans were to be looted and burned as "punishment" for subversive activities. This strategy was also treated as a propaganda tool, and such incidents were reported in the occupation newspapers as an example of what would happen to those who would want to aid partisans in the future.[200]

Upon arrival into an area, the *Ukrainian Schuma* was faced with partisan attacks which could not always be rebuffed. In fact, the partisans' successful attacks were so numerous that the situation in the region was often described as "serious and needing special attention".[201] After additional gendarmerie stations were added in Pleshchenicy, the situation stabilized by mid-February, and the number of encounters initiated by the partisans decreased. At that point, the *Schutzmannschaft* members mainly engaged in search missions for partisans.[202]

However, when the partisans felt that they had the advantage over the *Schuma*, they continued attacking separate smaller groups of auxiliary police. For example, on February 17, 1942, *Schutzmannschaft* patrol consisting of 80 policemen was attacked by 120 partisans in Zarechye. As a result, ten *Schuma* members were killed, and two of them were missing.[203] Such indications of the partisan abilities to confront the police battalions usually played a damaging

---

[199] HMM, fond 359, opis 1, folder 4, p. 13.

[200] Ibid., fond 359, opis 1, folder 4, p. 11.

[201] Ibid., fond 359, opis 1, folder 4, p. 4.

[202] Ibid., fond 359, opis 1, folder 4, pp. 1-15.

[203] Ibid., fond 359, opis1, folder, p. 7.

role on the morale of the population. The people often turned their sympathies to the partisan side when they received the news of the losses that the occupiers had suffered. For example, after the incident described above, *Schuma* 118 was forced to leave behind a number of its members who were wounded. When the unit members returned for their men, they discovered that all those left behind were shot and stripped of their clothing and weapons. Following that the local villagers openly supplied the partisans with food and clothing. The Zarechye engagement made the Germans very cautious, since they realized that the local inhabitants were unlikely to cooperate with them in the long run. Following the incident, they only passed through that village in the day time, otherwise they avoided it all together.[204]

The reports during the rest of January, February and November of 1943 indicate that the battalion was mainly engaged in minor encounters with the partisans in the area, involving from 30 to 90 *Schuma* members. The reports tend to indicate that the German side won most of the victories.[205] This information, however, should be approached critically, since it is known that many German reports were inflated as they made their way from the lowest executive organs to the higher command. The numbers that are given can be inaccurate.[206] However, these records also indicated that some operations resulted in partisan victories, and damages were inflicted on *Schuma* members. For instance, the report on February 17, 1943 indicated that the guerillas succeeded in disrupting the telephone communications between the *Schutzmannschaft* posts for several months. There were also several instances when *Schuma* was sent on search missions

---

[204] Ibid., fond 359, opis 1, folder 4, p. 9.

[205] Ibid., fond 359, opis 1, folder 4, pp. 7-14.

[206] Reitlinger, p. 448.

and failed to find any partisans at all. The report on March 19, 1943 also indicates the successful partisan disruption of telephone communications.[207]

This situation caused further loss of support and control over the local population. The records of the *Schutzmannschaft* battalion 118 indicate that the local people were so intimidated by the partisans that they refused to cooperate with the occupiers in their anti-partisan operations. However, it should be noted that the brutality with which the occupying forces carried themselves in the region might have been an important factor causing such a state of affairs.[208] If the situation seemed to stabilize in February, by March there were again indications of active partisan warfare in the area. The partisans seemed to be more successful than the invaders in gaining the support of the local population. This enabled them to find food supplies and establish bases of operation. In fact, at times the circumstances in which the anti-guerilla fighters found themselves were desperate and the members of the *Schutzmannschaft* were forced to seek help from other auxiliary police units. For example, on March 10, 1943 the *Schuma* requested assistance, so one company of the *Dirlewanger* Battalion was sent to help them out.[209]

The cooperation between various German and collaborationist units proved to be relatively effective on the occupied Belarussian territory, as well as in other republics. Therefore, efforts were made to increase the number of undertakings where various anti-partisan units were fighting together. In the spring of 1943 the larger anti-partisan operations began to play a major role in the actions of the *Schutzmannschaft* 118 battalion. These operations involved other units

---

[207] HMM, fond 359, opis 1, folder 4, p. 22.

[208] Ibid., fond 359, opis 1, folder 6, p. 16.

[209] Ibid., fond 359, opis 1, folder 6, p. 11.

and battalions, and were carefully planned out, as opposed to the small-scale search missions in which the *Schuma* members were participating up to that point. Several of those operations were conducted in conjunction with, and under command of, the *Dierlewanger* unit, as well as other *Ordumugdienst* battalions.[210]

The *Dierlewnager* battalion was formed in Krakow in 1942 and was solely comprised of German convicted criminals, including its commander, Oskar Dierlewanger. The regiment was known for its cruelty towards civilians. They forced women and children in the occupied territories to clear the mine fields, and committed many other actions that were considered "excesses" even in the German command. The *Generalkommissar* for Belarus Wilhelm Kube once pointed out that "the Battalion *Dierlewanger* especially has a reputation for destroying many human lives."[211] Furthermore, on a number of occasions Kube stressed his disgust with the brutalities against both civilians and partisans that were conducted by Ukrainian, Belarussian, Russian and Lithuanian auxiliaries.[212] In early 1943 Rosenberg complained to Himmler that the indiscriminate burning of Belarussian and Ukrainian villages actually worked against the Germans. It provided the enemy with excellent propaganda material, which the partisans used very effectively.[213] However, Dierlewanger and his battalion had very powerful protectors in the high command and were able to continue on with their brutal methods.[214]

---

[210] Ibid., fond 359, opis 1, folder 5, pp. 6-7.

[211] Cooper, p. 97.

[212] Reitlinger, p. 158.

[213] Cooper, p. 97.

[214] Reitlinger, pp. 235-237.

While operating under the command of the *Dierlewanger* battalion, *Schutzmannschaft* 118 members, in many cases, accepted more brutal methods for dealing with civilians and the captured partisans. In some cases they were ordered to be more ferocious to the civilians than they normally were.[215] But it is not clear if that was always the case. The *Ukrainian Schuma* members might have been unusually cruel in some instances in order to gain certain privileges or to advance their career in the German army.[216] In either case, cooperation with the *Dierlewanger* battalion had an effect on the actions of the *Schutzmannschaft* 118 members.

By the end of March, 1943 it became necessary to undertake more serious anti-partisan measures in the area of Pleshchenicy in order for the Germans to keep the stronghold of the region because the partisan movement continued gaining the strength. The gendarmerie stations and police battalions sent there as support were not able to keep up with the growing guerilla actions and needed further assistance. By that time, partisan activity began to vary beyond open warfare, as they began to employ more active propaganda methods, since they received their supplies from the Soviet command. They also began a so-called "rail war", successfully destroying German communication systems all over the occupied USSR. The rail war is considered one the most successful partisan achievements since it significantly disrupted the movement of German troops, and inflicted significant losses on the enemy army. In order to conduct the "rail war" the partisans needed to establish the base of operations in major towns where they could find a supply of explosives. Also, they needed a developed intelligence

---

[215] HMM, fond 359, opis 1, folder 5, pp. 12-18.

[216] Waldman, "German Use of Indigenous Auxiliary Police in the Occupied USSR", p. 19.

network in order to plant the explosives in the most crucial German communication points.[217] The Germans believed that the preparations for "rail war" operations were conducted in towns and could be uncovered if proper police surveillance of the most important points was established. In view of these developments, *Schutzmannshaft* 118 was placed under the authority of the local Pleshchenicy *Ordnungspolizei* with whom they were supposed to work together in upcoming major anti-partisan operations.[218]

While operating in the region, the *Schutzmannschaft* 118 unit became involved in one of the German undertakings that became engrained in the war memories of the Belarussian people as a whole. One of the important incidents in the Belarussian historiography of the Soviet period was the fate of the village, Khatyn, which was burned down with all its inhabitants. In the post-war Soviet Union this place was turned into a memorial complex, which was meant to symbolize all the other villages that were burned to the ground, and serve as a reminder of all the horrible crimes committed by Germans on Soviet land. The memorial left a tremendous impression on those who had seen it, and provoked the feelings of outraged anger among the Belarussians, who lost one out of every four citizens in the war.

> People from neighbouring villages and from far away stop by the figure of the man petrified with grief and rage and holding his child in his weak-ended arms; they see scores of ash-grey chimneys, which, like bell-towers, give forth a metallic ringing. The peals of the bells are sharp and brief like suppressed pain. Paved black paths, as if made from tomb stones, lead to stone gates that are open forever, and to the tall dark belltower chimneys on which the names of former villagers have been engraved... Kaminsky, Kaminskaya, Kaminskaya... Yaskevich, Yaskevich, Yaskevich... Iotka, Iotka, Iotka... Novitsky, Novitskaya... 50 years old, 42, 31,

---

[217] Кузьмин, p. 374, t.3.

[218] HMM, fond 359, opis 1, folder 5, p. 11.

> 17, 12, 3, 1, 1, 1... Children, so many children among the killed...[219]

Soviet history textbooks present the incident in a manner depicting the Germans as suddenly arriving and burning the place to the ground.[220] In a movie made after the war about Khatyn, all the soldiers burning the village speak strictly German. The main stress was put on the crime itself, the operation was presented with an obvious bias, without taking into consideration the multitude of important factors of this event. In particular, it was never mentioned that the atrocities were committed by former Soviet citizens who were collaborating with the German army, and not singlehandedly by the Germans. Most Belarussian visitors to the Khatyn memorial complex never realized the event in all its entirety. Soviet authorities realized that any revelation suggesting that the place was destroyed by collaborators who were Soviet citizens from a neighbouring republic, might be dangerous for a multi-national Soviet. Therefore, the most important task of the Soviet propaganda machine in this situation was to condemn the Germans for their crimes, and avoid at all costs all the information that might spark a conflict between various ethnic groups of the USSR.[221]

In 1980, the investigation conducted by prominent Belarussian writers Ales Adamovich, Yanka Bryl', and Vladimir Kolesnik culminated in the publication of their book, Out of the Fire. This book was based on interviews with the survivors of Khatyn and other Belarussian villages with similar faith, resulting in the beginnings of a new perspective on this event. For the first time the Soviet people were able to see the events through the eyes of those who lived through

---

[219] Adamovich, Bryl, and Kolesnik, p. 399.

[220] Кузьмин, t. 2 p. 32.

this horror. Though the book had undergone strict censorship, the stories that were told put human faces on the events and explained more about those who suffered through it. The book was the first to indicate that some of the people in the German uniform were not only speaking German. The people interviewed normally referred to the intruders as "the Germans", however, many stated that they had conversations with the auxiliary police members in their own language.[222]

With the new documentation that is available, it is clear that the majority of the participants of the operation were Ukrainian collaborators. This brings out several issues, including the utter destruction of the Soviet propaganda myth of "the brotherhood of the nations." At the same time, the deeds of the *Schutzmannschaft* 118 in the village of Khatyn might not have anything to do with the Ukrainians turning against the Belarussians. The main point was that the people in German service were full participants in German crimes, and as such were directly and equally involved, and bear the same responsibility for this action as the Germans themselves.

The pretext for the burning of Khatyn is indicated in the report dated March 22, 1943. The German commander of *Schuma* 118 Woelke travelled south on the Pleshchenicy highway with an escort. They were ambushed near Guba at the break of the telephone line they had gone to repair and four members, including commander Woelke, were killed. The Germans called for assistance, captured everyone they found in the area, and engaged in fights against the partisans. The pursuit of the partisans took the *Schutzmannschaft* 118 and German company of *Dierlewanger* Battalion to the village of Khatyn. Though there is no indication that the villagers

---

[221] Kuzmenko, p. 101.

[222] Adamovich, Bryl, and Kolesnik, p. 401, pp. 410-411, p.421.

themselves were supporters of the partisans, the Germans assumed that they were guilty, since the partisans were leading their "fire-fight" from that village. Prior to the incident, the village was considered to be unimportant, and the Germans did not even have any forces stationed there. The village then was captured and destroyed.[223] The villagers were gathered in the barn, their clothes torn off, and the barn then was set on fire. The doors were opened, but those who tried to escape were shot down by the machine guns. Iosif Iosifovich Kaminsky, one of the survivors of the Khatyn horror described:

> They had herded so many people in there that it was impossible to breathe, you couldn't so much as raise your arm. People were screaming, and the children worst of all - naturally, there were so many of us and we were all scared to death. Hay was stored there in the shed, and straw, for the cattle. So they set fire to it from the roof. The eaves were burning, sparks were showering down on people's heads, the hay and straw caught fire and people began to suffocate, we were so crammed together there was nothing to breathe. No air.[224]

Following this the battalion continued to engage in separate fights with the partisans. The reports generally list losses on both sides, showing that neither the *Schuma* 118 nor the partisans could gain significant advantage in the area over the course of April, 1943. There were also a number of cases when the partisans and their equipment were captured. Having problems with supplies, the captured equipment was gladly utilized by the auxiliary police members. The captured men were carefully questioned, and on the basis of the evaluation were either shot as communists or sent to the labour camps and utilized for economic purposes.[225]

---

[223] HMM, fond 359, opis 1, folder 5, p. 12.

[224] Adamovich, Bryl, and Kolesnik, p. 3.

[225] HMM, fond 359, opis 1, folder 5, p. 16.

The frequency of partisan activities demonstrated that the partisan forces in the area of Pleshchenicy grew significantly, and affected the relations between the civilian population and the occupiers. The local inhabitants were now becoming mistrustful of anything German, as the reports indicate, due to the threats by the partisans.[226] The *Schutzmannschaft* force therefore was strengthened by adding local men to the force.[227]

During same period major anti-partisan operations took place. On April 7, 1943 it participated in operation *Lenz-South*, and from the 17 until the 22 of April in a major anti-partisan seep known as *Zauberfloete*. On April 28 and May 2 the *Schutzmannschaft* 118 unit was a part of anti-partisan operations *Draufgaenger I* and *DraufgaengerII* respectively.[228] During this time the *Schutzmannschaft* 118 was given a code name *Feuer*. It is interesting to note that the non-Germans participating in the operations only knew the operation titles for its length. For example, the *Draufgaenger II* was known to the *Ukrainian Schuma* members as the "ten-day operation". Not all the units in the course of these operations were involved in significant fighting. In many cases several units were only encountered with a few partisans, and the outcome of some of the operations did not have an impact on the distribution of influence between the partisans and the Germans in the region.[229]

On May 10 the unit was ordered to return to their base in Pleshchenicy, and five days later they were ordered to proceed to Lagoisk. There it was to be prepared to work with

---

[226] Ibid., fond 359, opis 1, folder 5, p. 14.

[227] Ibid., fond 359, opis 1, folder 5, p. 18.

[228] Ibid., fond 359, opis 1, folder 5, p. 18.

[229] Golubovich, pp. 13-16.

Dierlewanger Battalion and German officer Wilke as *Kommandogruppe II* in Operation *Cottbus*.[230] It was the largest combined anti-partisan operation of the war. It was commanded by von Gottberg, and employed 16,662 men from the SS police, the Army and the *Luftwaffe* units.[231] During this operation the Germans were able to inflict heavy losses on the partisans, estimating that 4,500 were killed. In addition to that 5,000 "suspects" were eliminated, indicating the loss that was inflicted on the civilian population.[232] Despite these losses the effectiveness of this operation proved to be very small, since a few weeks after the operation was completed, the partisans were as strong as ever. Instead of going on the search missions for the guerillas, the units participating in the operation made their targets the people that they could easily find - the civilians. The military damage, therefore was relatively unimportant, and despite the reports of success to the centre, the operation did not bring the desired result - to damage the enemy militarily.[233] The methods that were employed by the anti-partisan units during the course of this operation provoked a storm of protests from the German civil administration of the region. *Generalkommissar* Kube described *Cottbus* as "a sorry picture of senseless destruction".[234] He further concluded that "if the treatment of the native population in the occupied eastern areas is continued in the same manner... then in the coming winter we may expect not partisans, but the

---

[230] HMM, fond 359, opis 1, folder 5, p. 21.

[231] Cooper, p. 156.

[232] Ibid., p. 156.

[233] Ibid., p. 156.

[234] Mulligan, p. 142.

revolt of the entire country."[235]

During stage one of this operation the battalion was involved in looting and burning villages hoping to eliminate the partisans or those who were in contact with guerillas. The reports indicate, however, that the unit had few encounters with the partisans. Their engagements were mainly with the civilian population that was suspected to be in contact with guerillas. For example, on May 20, 1943, two of the *Schutzmannschaft* battalion members were killed as they were passing through a mined bridge near the village Novo Vileika. The battalion then searched and looted homes in the village, forcing civilians to hide in the forest, which in turn caused the battalion to comb the area and force the villagers back into the village by using their dogs. The civilians were then sorted and either sent back to Pleshchenicy as labourers or burned in a barn in the village.[236] On the rest of the march the *Schuma* members fought, looted and seized farm animals and supplies where possible. By May 28, 1943, *Schuma* 118 took up position in Beresina area, and the next day was ordered to return to Pleshchenicy. At the end of the stage I of Operation Cottbus, *Schuma* 118 had to defend itself from a massive partisan attack. Following that, on June 5 it was ordered to move towards Novogrudok area on foot, where it arrived on June 24.

Upon arrival, the unit was subordinated to *Kampfgurppe* Koerner for participation in the anti-partisan operation *Hermann* in the Novogrudok-Stolbcy area and then in the Neman and Naliboki forests. On July 15 it proceeded to the Naliboki forest to take its position in the

---

[235] Ibid., p. 143.

[236] HMM, fond 359, opis 1, folder 6, p. 34.

upcoming operation.[237] The operation was successful, since German forces were clearly superior and the partisans could not stand up to them. The Soviet side urged the partisans not to engage the enemy in open battle, bu many of the guerilla fighters refused to remain passive and attempted to set several ambushes. However, they were discovered and destroyed due to the impressive intelligence network that the Germans were able to establish in the area of operation. Numerous spies were reporting the information to the Germans, making it completely impossible for the inferior partisan forces to resist. Several of the spies even discovered the hiding places of Belarussian and Jewish civilians and reported them to the Germans. The *Schutzmannschaft* 118 participated in the uncovering and the subsequent destruction of one of the Jewish hiding places on July 26, 1943.[238] In the report about Operation *Herman*, the Germans claimed that they inflicted even more casualties on the partisan forces than during the operation *Cottbus*. The Soviet historiography, however, denied the fact that the partisans suffered much damage during this operation. Since the partisans were informed in advance about the size of operation *Herman* they in many cases avoided the Germans, and thus were able to preserve their strength, and prevent unnecessary civilian deaths, by avoiding contacts with the local populaton.[239]

After the operation *Hermann* was complete, the *Schuma* was stationed in Novogrudok, and took part in anti-partisan fighting in the Naliboki forest area. On August 31, 1943, it was

---

[237] Ibid., fond 359, opis 1, folder 6, p. 36.

[238] Tec, Nechama, Defiance - The Bielski Partisans: The Story of the Largest Armed Rescue of Jews by Jews During World War II, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993), pp. 115-122.

[239] Кузьмин, t. 2, p. 300

subordinated to the local *Ordnungspolizei*, and their station in Novogrudok became official.[240] The turn of events on the front required some major reorganization in the German police units. The *Schuma* 118 was folded into *Schuma* 63 in Novogrudok in October of 1943. By December the unit went through another reorganization, and by early summer of 1944 it was officially incorporated into the newly-formed Waffen-SS division 30. For continuation of their military training, the various components of the new division were transferred to France by train through Silesia. Soon after its arrival to France, most of the battalion went over to the French partisans, even some of its German officer staff.[241]

Therefore, one of the reasons why the members of the *Schutzmannschaft* Battalion 118 initially joined the German service might have been to save their own lives. Throughout the war, under the influence of various factors, they gradually became full participants of the crimes that were committed by the invaders on the territory of Belarus. The *Ukrainian Schuma* members were treated differently than locally recruited auxiliary police, and therefore, responded to various German orders in a different fashion. Also, frequent interactions with the soldiers of the infamous *Dierlewanger* unit set the example of brutality for the *Schuma* members. They followed this example sometimes by force, merely following the orders, and sometimes willingly, in order to advance in the ranks of the German army. With the victory of the Red Army the battalion members realized that their actions during the war made it impossible for

---

[240] Wiggers, Richard. The German Occupation fo Belorussia: A summary fo the fate of the Jewish minority, the Soviet partisan movement, and the German civil administration, military and SS and Police structured and tactics, June-1941-July 1944, (Ottawa: Crimes Against Humanity and War Crimes Section, Departmetn of Justice, Canada, August 2, 1989), p. 13.

[241] Ibid., p. 15.

them to return to their homes. They were again faced with the matter of life and death, and had to find another way to survive under the new circumstances.

V. EPILOGUE

Fascist Germany capitulated on May 8, 1945 and the allied powers proceeded to decide Germany's faith in the course of the conferences held in Berlin from July 17 to August 2 1945. A crucial aspect of the agreement that was reached by the allies was the statement that it was necessary "to root out German militarism and Nazism and take all the measures necessary to insure that Germany never again presents a threat to its neighbors".[242] One of the first steps for achieving this goal was considered to be punishment of war criminals. Initially, the allies tried members of the German higher command. These were the people whose names were well known to the world by 1945. They were easily located and sent to the tribunal. After the main Nuremberg tribunals took place in February 1946, the victors believed that there were still many criminals of the lower ranks that had to pay for their deeds. The governments of the four allied powers proceeded to search and penalize those guilty of war crimes up until the late 1980s.[243]

The Soviet government was particularly eager to punish war criminals, because it felt that the USSR suffered more from the hands of the Germans than their allies had during the war. In addition to the sentiment of vengeance felt towards the invaders and collaborators, tracing down and punishing war criminals had an important ideological weight. This was because the people who lived in the occupied territories during the war were exposed to German propaganda and were affected by it in various degrees. Also, non-Russian inhabitants of the occupied USSR

---

[242] Калинин, В. Б., В. И. Нечипуренко и В. М. Савельев, Коммунистическая Партия в Великой Отечественной войне (июнь 1941г. – 1945 г.): документы и материалы, (Москва: Издательство политической литературы, 1970), p. 463

[243] Loftus, p. 3.

were able to express their nationalist sentiments, to an extent, during the war. This, the Soviet authority believed, further aggravated the ethnic conflicts that had existed in the USSR prior to the war. It was important for the Soviet government to root out all indications of nationalism and disagreements between the various ethnic groups that temporary freedom to express their individual ethnicity might have caused. Already in September of 1944 the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the USSR set goals for the political and educational work among the population of Belarus. One of its crucial aspects was anti-fascist propaganda. It stated:

> Taking into account the fact that the population of Belarussian SSR during three years was denied the truthful Soviet information and was exposed to the treacherous fascist propaganda, the party organizations of the Communist Party of Belarus must widely use in their educational propagandist work the facts of the bloody crimes of the German-fascist invaders against the Belarussian people, make these crimes of the occupiers known to the entire population, unveil the German bandit politics of enslavement and extermination of the peoples of the USSR, and inflame the hatred of the enemy among the masses.[244]

This decision was realized successfully, and the German crimes committed in the occupied USSR were made known to the world through various forms of propaganda: mass media, newly created traditions and rituals, school programs, historical science, literature, and even art and music.[245] What was considered a very important aspect in all this propaganda was the focus that was placed on the victimization of Soviet people. Soviet propaganda constantly stressed that the difficulties of the war did not touch all the allied powers to the same degree. They also, on many occasions, emphasized that the USSR played the decisive role in the war.

---

[244] Калинин, Нечипуренко и Савельев, p. 118.

[245] Tumarkin, Nina, The Living and the Dead: The Rise and Fall of the Cult of World War II in Russia, (New York: Harper Collins Publishers, Inc., 1994), pp. 1-2, 43.

They argued that the German invasion changed the power balance, and brought more ideological aspects into the course of the war. Militarily, it involved the Soviet army, which was the largest of the allied forces. The main battles of the Second World War took place on the Soviet-German front, and the German army suffered 73% of all losses in its struggle with the Soviet army. The USSR also played a decisive role in the liberation of the countries in Eastern and Central Europe.[246] All these concepts became especially weighty during the Cold War, when it was constantly emphasized that the USSR paid the heaviest price for victory in the Second World War and that this was not recognized by the allies. In this fashion, Soviet propaganda channeled some of the frustration with Germany and the war devastation that it caused onto their World War II allies, who shortly after the war became enemies in the Cold War.[247]

It is unfair, however, to stress the mere propaganda aspect that the Soviet government pursued through the prosecutions of war criminals and popularizing the knowledge about the devastation caused by war. The destruction and human sacrifices that fell upon the peoples of the USSR during the war were considerable, and these facts should not be forgotten. The material damages of the USSR amounted to almost 41% of the losses that were suffered by all the countries participating in the war. During the war years the Germans burned and destroyed 1710 cities and towns, over 70 thousand villages, about 32 thousand industrial enterprises, and 65 thousand kilometers of railroad tracks.[248]

Aside from the economic devastation that fell upon the USSR, the human sacrifices

---

[246] Гречко, v. 12, pp. 33-36.

[247] Nina Tumarkin, pp. 49-51.

[248] Гречко, v. 12, p. 148.

suffered by it were enormous. The Soviets lost over 28 million people during the war years. The majority of these were civilians who died in death camps as a result of fascist repressions, associated disease and hunger, and aviation bombings.[249]

Therefore, it is no wonder that the Soviet government was seeking revenge against war criminals in order to strengthen its protective role among its own people, and at the same time to ensure that the horrors of the war would never repeat themselves. The victimization motive in their propaganda made the retaliation issue ever more pressing. The Soviet Union played an active role in the course of the Nuremberg International Military Tribunal, and following that proceeded to punish war criminals of the lower ranks whom the Soviet security organization could trace abroad or find on their own territory.[250] During the trials, Soviet lawyers opted for the death penalty for almost all war criminals. Consequently, many war criminals of the lower rank who were tried by the Soviet courts in the following years were sentenced and executed.[251] This pursuit of revenge in the USSR was not always reasonable and sometimes reached serious excesses. Many ordinary citizens suffered from the after-war wave of the Stalinist repressions. Several ethnic groups, like Crimean Tatars, for example, were accused of being collaborators and sent thousands of miles from their own homes. Many representatives of the larger ethnic groups, such as Belarussians and Ukrainians, were dealt with individually. Those who were thought of as presenting a threat or simply disloyal to the Soviet system were accused of either nationalism, or collaboration with the Germans, and sent to the concentration camps in Siberia. The

---

[249] Гречко, p. 151, and Overy, Richard, Russia's War: A History of the Soviet War Effort: 1941-1945, (New York: Penguin Books, 1998), p. 287.

[250] Гречко, v. 12, pp. 403-404.

[251] Reitlinger, p. 15.

education and propaganda campaign called for by the Communist party in 1944, in many cases, turned into political terror in Ukraine and Belarus during 1947-1948.[252]

Wartime collaboration and involvement in war crimes also received wide attention in the west. For western people who were appalled by the horrible crimes committed by the Germans in concentration camps, the main goal was to ensure that this never would happen again. At the same time, western countries did not want to be blamed for sheltering war criminals, and this also became an important motivation for war crime investigations in the West. The Western participants of the Nuremberg trials partly blamed the horrors of the war on the existence of totalitarian regimes of government. To them it proved once again the value of democracy, and they pursued the punishment of war criminals more in the theoretical sense, with less vengeance in mind, prosecuting those whose actions went against their democratic ideals.[253]

There were several war criminals that were traced among the anti-partisan formations, from the highest command to the lower ranks. Chief of Anti-Partisan Units von dem Bach was prosecuted and also used as a witness at the Nuremberg Trials. It was noted that anti-partisan warfare in the *Reichcommissariate Ostland* reached its highest brutality when he was appointed to this post. Even most German memoirists described him in negative terms, as a brutal policeman who was responsible for bad command of the troops, and all kinds of psychological and tactical errors.[254] Von dem Bach directly admitted that anti-partisan operations on the territory of which he was in charge were chaotic due to the insufficient orders. This resulted in

---

[252] Lubachko, pp. 167-168, 170.

[253] Waldman, "German Occupation Administration and Experience in the USSR", p. 11.

[254] Reitlinger, p. 237.

the unnecessary killing of a large number of civilians. Moreover, it caused the increase of brutality on both sides and made fighting the enemy unnecessarily difficult.[255] Von dem Bach's statements therefore set the frame for further trials of the ordinary collaborators who were conducting anti-partisan operations. He admitted to unnecessary killing and therefore gave the Soviet judges the weapon with which to attack its citizens who were guilty of collaboration.[256]

In their investigations the Soviet government was particularly biased against citizens of certain nationalities who were believed to be less loyal to the Communist State. This bias was not necessarily concealed and found its expression in the discrimination that some ethnicities experienced during the trials. It was openly displayed and used as an important propaganda device in order to weaken and disarm the nationalist movements in all the republics of the USSR. The Soviet government was particularly biased against Ukrainians. It claimed that most of the population of Western Ukraine welcomed the "re-unification" of the Ukrainian territories under Soviet rule, and were supportive of the new regime. It stated that only a small group of nationalists were against the Soviet government, and they were the only ones responsible for collaboration once the Germans invaded.[257] They formed their own nationalist army, many of them joined the German police, and others assisted the invaders in administrative tasks at home. The Soviet government from 1945 to 1987 engaged in a deliberate campaign to proclaim all Ukrainian nationalists as war criminals and to convince Western nations of this "truth". This affected the war crime investigations in the west, since most of the materials that western

---

[255] Cooper, pp. 55-57.

[256] Waldman, "German Occupation Administration and Experience in the USSR", p. 112.

[257] Marples, pp. 65-67.

countries used as evidence were provided by the Soviets.[258] In this view, the Soviet side was determined to use any evidence in order to track down Ukrainian nationalists and execute them.

However, the Soviet government also had to be very careful not to provoke any nationalistic conflicts within the USSR. For that purpose, only certain war crimes committed by Soviet citizens of various nationalities were made public. Any indication of harm done by one group against another ethnic group remained hidden.[259] Thus nationalistic issues were only used as far as they indicated the potential to collaborate with the enemy. Deeper nationalistic and other ideological issues were erased from Soviet texts. For that purpose, the Ukrainian, Belarussian, Lithuanian and other non-Russian collaborators were presented as Soviet citizens, who committed crimes against "their own people", i.e. the Soviet people, not their particular ethnic group. However, such an approach ignored important patriotic and nationalistic sentiments that any ethnic "collaborators" might have had. Provided that collaboration is a willing assistance and cooperation with an enemy of one's country, it was important to define exactly what the presumed war criminals considered to be their own country.[260] The Soviet authorities, though, were not interested in such definitions. In order to serve its propaganda goals, the Soviet government investigated the case of the *Schutzmannschaft* battalion 118. This case was not closed until 1987. The truth about many actions of the battalion, in particular such important event as the burning of Khatyn village, was carefully hidden from the general public.

The Soviet government was aware that several of the *Ordnungdienst* and

---

[258] Ibid., pp. 79-80.

[259] Loftus, p. 71.

[260] Гречко, t. 11, p. 473.

Schutzmannschaft divisions were comprised of Soviet citizens. The materials concerning the *Schutzmannschaft* 118 battalion were captured during the German retreat, and therefore most of the evidence and information on the battalion members was available to the authorities. However, the move of the battalion to France made it difficult to find the members of the battalion. The fact that the *Ukrainian Schuma* kept switching sides, and did not keep detailed records of its actions, only aggravated the problem. The Soviet government pursued war criminals living abroad when definite facts and materials were available. Also, in the conditions of the Cold War, the Soviet authorities could not always proceed with their investigations in foreign countries, since many governments had become unfriendly to the Soviet Union.[261]

Investigation of the cases of wartime collaboration, however, did not end with the trials in 1945-1946. The Soviet authorities felt the need for retribution. All the war criminals were to be found and executed. In 1986 Soviet security undertook a further search for the most influential members of the *Schutzmannschaft* battalion 118, Mruaviev and Vasura. They sent a request for information to the security services in the German Democratic Republic and were able to get important information concerning these people, as well as about the other German members of the battalion, captain Tuttas, captain Ernst Schmidt and lieutenant Hans Osterreig. The committee organized in the German Democratic Republic reviewed the film footage that was available to them and made conclusions about Vasura's and Muraviev's involvement in the actions of the *Schutzmannschaft* 118 battalion. The two former Soviet citizens held lower officer ranks in the German army and were proven to have directly given a number of orders concerning

---

[261] Waldman, "German Occupation Administration and Experience in the USSR", p. 113.

executions and other actions of the battalion. However, the East German authorities were not able to provide any information concerning where these people can be found. The investigation conducted against the German members of the battalion also did not find where they resided at the time.[262] The Soviet authorities then proceeded with the investigation on their own without involving several foreign agencies. It is most likely that these members of the *Ukrainian Schuma* were never found and tried. The exact results of this investigation, though, are not yet accessible due to the restrictions placed on it by the current government of the republic of Belarus.

The Prosecution of war criminals is an important mission of all the allied governments, which after the war claimed to be dedicated to the preservation of peace on earth. The horrible crimes that were committed by the Nazis and their servants should never be forgotten, and the importance of the historical works such as this is to shed light on the events that happened. On the other hand, ignoring the individual cases of smaller units and battalions and their actions during the war will limit people's knowledge of the complexities of war. In essence, this can be interpreted as a continuation of collaboration into our days.

Investigation and prosecution of collaborators guilty of war crimes, however, raises a number of important issues. The governments that undertook the mission of prosecuting war criminals were often hypocritical in their dedication to sentencing all those who they thought were guilty of war crimes. The Soviet government, prior to the war, committed enough crimes itself to alienate its own people and cause them to question their loyalties. Later on, the Stalinist order of prosecuting all those who were captured as war prisoners indicated that their own government cleared itself of responsibility for those who found themselves under German

---

[262] HMM, folder 6, p. 36.

captivity, leaving those people responsible for their own survival. However, following the war, this important aspect was never taken into account by the prosecutors of Soviet war crimes. In turn, the American government, which took an active role in finding and executing war criminals, employed many of them at the end of the war without any attempts to investigate who those people were. The French government even made suggestions to some war criminals to hide their past, and covered for them while it was employing their valuable anti-partisan skills at its service.

Therefore, the judgmental attitude that exists in modern historiography towards many collaborators in the former USSR and other European countries should be revised. Though the circumstances in which many of those people found themselves by no means obliviates them of the crimes that they have committed, it is necessary to take into account these circumstances and try to understand the motivations that the alleged criminals had for their crimes.

The members of the *Schutzmannschaft* battalion 118 were primarily driven into German servitude by the state of affairs in which they found themselves. Captured by the Germans and abandoned by their own government as prisoners of war these people were driven by the motivation of their very physical survival. Once the direct danger to their lives had passed, and they became enlisted in the German army, they could claim their motivation to be the nationalistic anti-Russian sentiments that were spread amongst many Ukrainians. They also were driven by anti-bolshevik feelings that many of the Soviet Ukrainians had due to the pre-war Stalinist repressions. In the end, as it appears from their actions, the members of the *Schutzmannschaft* 118 battalion dedicated themselves to advancement in the German service, and gaining higher ranks. Once the defeat of Germany became obvious, they once again took actions

necessary to ensure their survival and kept switching sides in order to avoid capital punishment. Therefore, after the war they were also mainly concerned with their own survival. Also, the decisions that they took during the war might have affected their moral beliefs, and once they were able to make a decision against their own government, it was easy for them to keep changing loyalties. They became mere mercenaries ready to serve whoever would hire them.

The crimes against the Belarussian people that were committed by the *Schuma* members cannot be explained nor justified through the prism of their nationalistic beliefs or through the political circumstances in which they found themselves. However, the political conditions of their homeland and ideological struggles that went on there prior to and during the war, have definitely affected these people's mentality and are partially responsible for the actions that they took during the war. The government that did not take full responsibility for protection of their citizens, and which was willing to use ordinary people in their ideological struggle, are partially responsible for the actions their people took in order to survive. However, this was never taken into account when the war criminals were prosecuted after the war. Therefore, the *Schutzmannschaft* 118 battalion members are as much criminals as victims in the great tragedy of the Second World War.

CONCLUSION

The study of the *Schutzmannschaft* battalion 118 deals with collaboration as one of the popular responses to the German invasion and occupation of the USSR during World War II. It shows that the decision to collaborate with the enemy by the *Ukrainian Schuma* members was based on a variety of motives, not the least important of which was survival. It also gives an insight into the complex question of the histories of nationalities and nationalism, and war crimes and war guilt issues.

A case study of one particular collaborationist unit in the USSR demonstrates that the generalized approach to the issues of the Second World War which was typical for historiography of the 1950s, 60s and 70s, omits many important factors that influenced people's behaviour, and, in some instances, even the course of the war itself. A look at *Schutzmannschaft* battalion 118 does not uncover all of those factors, since it mainly examines the experience of those who chose to collaborate with the invaders. Nevertheless, it helps us understand the complexity of the wartime experience in the occupied zone.

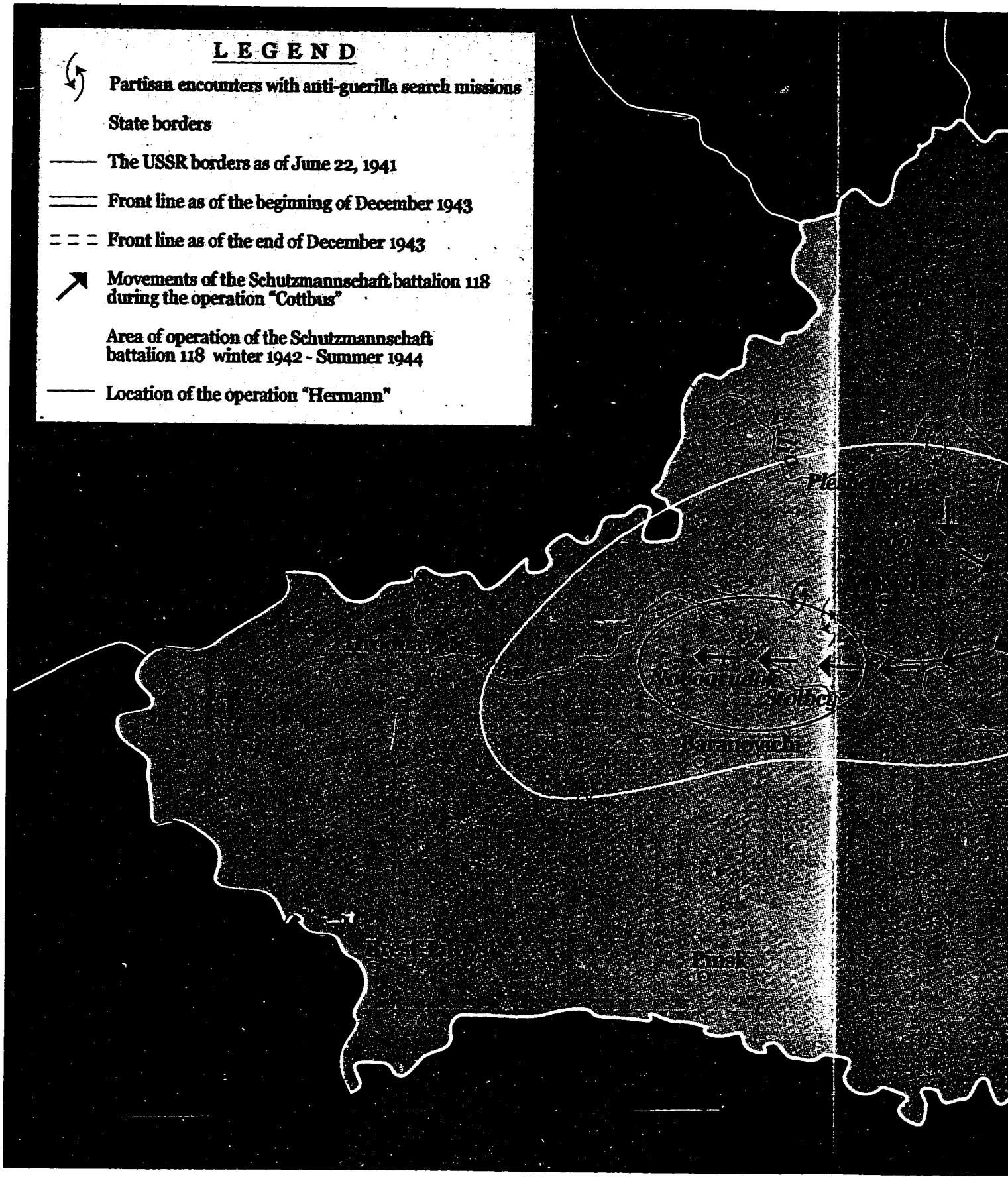
The Cold War historiography suggested that the Soviet Union was an ethnically diverse society. However, many scholars tended to use many generalizations when addressing the issues of nationality, ethnic consciousness and nationalism. For example, the terms "Ukrainian", or "Russian" were generally used to mean the population of the respective Soviet republics, not taking into account that there were many other nationalities living in the area. Moreover, when talking about nationalism, many historians referred to the anti-Russian sentiments of the non-Russian population of the USSR. However, there were several political parties calling themselves "nationalist", which had very different from one another political views. Clarification of such issues in the modern day studies has definitely helped better understanding of the subject.

This work also addresses the question of responsibility of one's own actions and war guilt. The traditional approach that dominated in the early after-war historiography held that all those who collaborated with the Nazis were traitors, and condemned all the collaborators, whether they were guilty or not of the war crimes. A case study of the *Ukrainian Schuma* shows that people not always could control their destinies during the war, and in many instances acted in the way that the circumstances around them forced them.

Even though there are now more detailed studies that deal with various nuances of the military history of the USSR during World War II, there still remains much to be done in this area. The detailed approach to the social history of the USSR has led to several important discoveries. For example, works Scheila Fitzpatrick's Stalin's Reluctant Peasants, and Stephen Kotkin's Magnetic Mountain: Stalinism as civilization examine respectively groups of peasants and workers in the Soviet state, and come to similar conclusions. They infer that within the groups under their study there was a wide variety of responses to the Soviet government and its actions. This approach sharply differs from the historiography of this subject written in the 1960s and 70s in the USSR and in the West. Then, the Soviet historians claimed that both Soviet workers and peasants were united in their support towards the government. The western historians, on the contrary, speculated that the peasantry and working masses of the Soviet Union resented totalitarian and oppressive regime that existed in the country. The studies by Kotkin and Fitzpatrick demonstrates that such black and white approach leads us to omit many important factors that motivate people and prompt them to respond in one way or the other.

Though there is some progress made in this direction in the area of military history of the USSR, even more is needed. Many more important subjects, such as minority groups in the USSR during the war, still have to be addressed in more detail. And there still remains much to be gained by rethinking the questions that we once though were answered.

AREA OF OPERATION OF THE SHUTZMANNSCHAFT BATTAL



HANNSCHAFT BATTALION 118 WINTER 1942 - SUMMER 1944

REFERENCES

Primary sources

Golubovich, L. A. Belarussian Collaborationist Military Forces. [Белорусские колаборационные вооружённые силы]. Alexander Dallin's Papers. Stanford: Hoover Institution Archives, Box 6, Folder 3.

Howell, Edgar M. "The Soviet Partisan Movement 1941-1944". Department of the Army, World War II German Military Studies. August 1956. New York: Garland Publishing, Inc., 1979.

Липило, П. П. и В. Ф. Романовский. Преступления немецко-фашистских оккупантов в Белоруссии, 1941-1944. Минск: «Беларусь», 1965.

United States Holocaust Memorial Museum Research Institute Archives, (HMM). The Sara Rosjanski Donation – Selected Records from the Belarus Central State Archives.

Waldman, Eric. "German Occupation Administration and Experience in the USSR". War Documentation Project. Maryland: The John Hopkins University Operations Research Office, May 1955.

Waldman, Eric. "German Use of Indigenous Auxiliary Police in the Occupied USSR: The *Ordnungsdienst* (OD) in Army Group Center: A Case Study in the Utilization of Soviet Nationals for Security and Public Safety Tasks". War Documentation Project. Maryland: Johns Hopkins University, May 1955.

War Documentation Project Staff. "The Soviet Partisan Movement in World War II: Summary and Conclusions". Project "Alexander," General Series, volume 2. Alabama Air Research and Development Command, January 1954.

Secondary sources

Абцедарский, Л. С. История Белорусской ССР. Минск: Издетельство Академии Наук Белорусской ССР, 1961.

Adamovich, Ales, Yanka Bryl, and Vladimir Kolesnik. Out of the Fire. Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1980.

Armstrong, John. Ukrainian Nationalism. New York: Columbia University Press, 1963.

Armstrong, Johh. Soviet Partisans in World War II. Madison: The University of Wisconsin Press. 1964.

Boshyk, Yury. Ukraine During World War II: History and Its Aftermath. Edmonton: Canadian Institute of Ukrainian Studies. 1986.

Cooper, Matthew. The Nazi War Against Soviet Partisans 1941-1944. New York: Stein and Day Publishers. 1979.

Dallin, Alexander. German Rule in Russia, 1941-1945: A Study of Occupation Policies. London: MacMillan and Company Ltd.. 1957.

Dixon, Aubrey, and Otto Heilbrunn. Communist guerilla Warfare. New York: Frederick A. Praeger, Publisher, 1955.

Дубина, К. К. История Украинской ССР. Киев: «Наукова думка», 1966.

Гречко, А. А. История Второй Мировой войны. Москва: Ордена Трудового Красного Знамени военное издательство Министерства Обороны СССР, 1973.

Калинин, В. Б., В. И. Нечипуренко и В. М. Савельев. Коммунистическая Партия в Великой Отечественной войне (июнь 1941г. – 1945 г.): документы и материалы. Москва: Издательство политической литературы, 1970.

Kamenetsky, Ihor. Secret Nazi Plans for Eastern Europe: A Study of Lebensraum Policies. New Haven: College and University Press, 1961.

Kamenka, Eugene. Ideas and Ideologies: Community As a Social Ideal. London: Edward Arnold (Publishers) Ltd.. 1982.

Kosiak, John. "The Occupation and Oppression of Byelorussia by Soviet Russia". The Ukrainian Quarterly, vol. XXX, No. 4, Winter 1974.

Kosyk, Wolodymyr. The Third Reich and Ukraine. New York: Peter Lang Publishing, Inc.. 1993.

Кузьмин, А. Т. Всенародная борьба в Белоруссии против немецко-фашистских захватчиков. Минск: Институт Истории Партии про ЦК КПБ – филиал Института Марксизма-Ленинизма и издательство «Беларусь», 1983.

Kuzmenko, V. I. "Belarus in World War II: Some Aspects of the Modern View of the

Problem". The Journal of Slavic Military Studies, vol. 11, No. 2, June 1998.

Littlejohn, David. The Patriotic Traitors: A History of Collaboration in German-Occupied Europe, 1940-45. London: William Heinemann Ltd., 1972.

Липило, П. П. Непокорённая Белоруссия: воспоминания и статьи о всенародном партизанском движении в Белоруссии в годы Великой Отечественной войны (1941 - 1945гг.). Москва: Военное Издательство Министерства Обороны СССР, 1963.

Loftus, John. The Belarus Secret. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1982.

Lubachko, Ivan S. Belorussia Under Soviet Rule, 1917-1957. Lexington: The University Press of Kentucky, 1972.

Magocsi, Paul Robert. A History of Ukraine. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1996.

Marples, David R. Stalinism in Ukraine in the 1940s. New York: St. Martin's Press, Inc., 1992.

Marples, David R. Belarus: From Soviet Rule to Nuclear Catastrophe. Edmonton: The University of Alberta Press, 1996.

Muller, Role-Dieter, and Ueberschar, Geld R. Hilers's War in the East 1941-1945: A Critical Assessment. Oxford: Berghahn Books, 1997.

Mulligan, Timothy Patrick. The Politics of Illusion and Empire: German Occupation Policy in the Soviet Union, 1942-1943. New York: Praeger Publishers, 1988.

Найдзюк, Язэп і Іван Касяк. Беларусь учора і сяння: папулярны нарыс з гісторыі Беларусі. Менск: Навука і тэхніка, 1993.

Overy, Richard. Russia's War: A History of the Soviet War Effort: 1941-1945. New York: Penguin Books, 1998.

Reitlinger, Gerald. The House Built on Sand: The Conflicts of German Policy in Russia 1939-1945. London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1960.

Schulte, Theo J. The German Army and Nazi Policies in Occupied Russia. Oxford: Berg Publishers Ltd., 1989.

Страдзиня, К. Я. История Латвийской ССР. Рига: Издательство Академии Наук Латвийской ССР, 1958.

Таутавичюс, А. История Литовской ССР. Вильнюс: Мокслас, 1978.

Tec, Nechama. Defiance - The Bielski Partisans: The Story of the Largest Armed Rescue of Jews by Jews During World War II. New York: Oxford University Press, 1993.

Thomas, Nigel, and Peter, Abbott. Partisan Warfare 1941-1945. London: Osprey Publishing Ltd., 1983.

Thorwald, Jurgen. The Illusion: Soviet Soldiers in Hitler's Armies. New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1975.

Tumarkin, Nina. The Living and the Dead: The Rise and Fall of the Cult of World War II in Russia. New York: Harper Collins Publishers, Inc., 1994.

Vakar, Nicholas, P. Belorussia: The Making of a Nation. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1956.